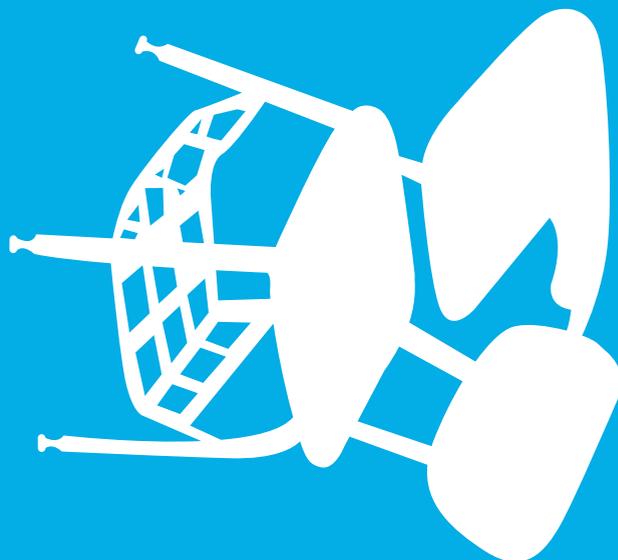


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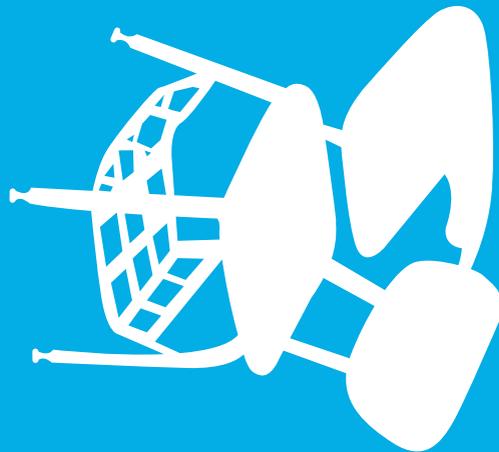
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Cover Story



**12** **Violence in Schools: Prevention is Key**  
BY ALISON LAURIO

As schools across the U.S. cope with violence and its prevention, social workers are instrumental in helping students recover and in working to stop violence before it happens.



**22** **Digital Devices and Social Media: The Good, the Bad and the Ugly**

BY ALISON LAURIO

There is debate about whether youths' use of technology and social media on phones and other devices is harmful or helpful. Many agree it is both.

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# Corporate Responses to Acts of Racism Show Commitment to Diversity

BY KATHRYN CONLEY WEHRMANN, PhD, LCSW



A situation involving an extremely offensive tweet by actress and comedian Roseanne Barr earlier this year elicited a swift and decisive response from ABC—cancellation of Ms. Barr’s top-rated television show.

Money and TV ratings aside, this action signaled that we want respect for multicultural values in our society. This is a critically important message in a political climate where some in our society perceive that they have license to openly denigrate others based on race, religion, sexual orientation, and disability or immigration status.

A short while before the Barr incident, Starbucks responded quickly to racist behavior by an employee with a plan to demonstrate a long-term commitment to diversity by launching an effort to combat racism and eradicate racial bias in the company.

Starbucks’ management has reached out to leaders in the field to develop an approach to educating their employees and making changes in corporate policies with the intention to eliminate the negative outcomes of unconscious bias.

Both of the incidents I have described were high-profile and the actions that followed were widely covered in the press. Corporate response in both cases was swift. These responses along with similar rapid corporate responses to the sexual assault and harassment of women in the workplace are a positive development in a society that continues to grapple with every kind of “ism.”

There is no doubt that financial interests drove some of the corporate decisions to an extent, and some might say the focus was entirely on their bottom lines. But I think that would be selling our corporate citizens short and not taking into account the vast influence these companies have in our society.

For example, Starbucks has 8,000 locations throughout our country and employs an estimated 176,000 people. Likewise, ABC—as a large television network, owned by Disney-ABC Television Group—has significant influence in terms of the people it employs and the kind of programming it produces for its viewers.

We should not underestimate how powerful it can be when such organizations choose to act in ways that value diversity and demonstrate intolerance for racism or any other form of discrimination.

The change in the White House administration has

shown us where our continuing weaknesses and challenges are in the fight against racism. Every day it seems like there is some new incident or statement that leave many of us wondering where to begin in our efforts to push back against racism and other forms of discrimination.

A good place to begin might be by focusing on what MSNBC referred to as “everyday racism” in a recent special network presentation, *Everyday Racism in America* (msnbc.com).

MSNBC presented an in-depth look at what many white people simply don’t understand—the everyday racism or microaggressions that people of color experience and endure on a daily basis as they are looked past in the checkout line, are surveilled by store personnel, or bear witness to white people clutching their purses a little closer or crossing the street when they encounter a person of color. And worse, when some have to deal

# social work advocates

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“We need to redouble our efforts to learn about the experiences of others and find ways to stand up and raise our voices against racism”

with calls to the police about “suspicious behavior.”

I am reminded of the incident of the black Yale student who was reported to the police by a white student for napping in the common room of her dorm. Lolade Siyonbola, a tuition-paying student who had earned her place at Yale, was called on by campus police to justify why she was in the common room. There are countless other examples that could be cited.

MSNBC’s town hall panelists included individuals who are invested in eliminating racism and promoting civil rights in our country. In addition to hearing from a number of audience members, including Ms. Siyonbola, panelists provided their perspectives on everything from being concerned for those who did not have friends to support them, to a reflection on our current status as a society when it comes to race relations.

This town hall can serve as a model and inspiration for all of us as we think about what spaces we can create, or

perhaps find, that can offer the opportunity for us to have conversations that are both courageous and compassionate.

We must actively seek and use these opportunities if we are going to move forward on our journey to tear down the everyday and institutional racism that keeps us from being a country that can truly and collectively thrive.

The Starbucks incident and Ms. Barr’s egregious tweet represent our special challenge to have those important talks, to listen with our hearts, to have an honest exchange of ideas and to dialogue across differences.

We need to redouble our efforts to learn about the experiences of others and find ways to stand up and raise our voices against racism—to risk conflict with others to be on the right side of the issue.

One thing we can be certain of as social workers is that racism and discrimination in any form have no place in our society, as our Code of Ethics reminds us.

Contact Kathryn Wehrmann at [president@socialworkers.org](mailto:president@socialworkers.org). 

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Social Work Advocates is NASW’s primary means of communicating with the membership about association activities and developments in professional practice and social policy. It carries statements of opinion by a variety of spokespersons and, as space permits, letters to the editor. The views expressed do not necessarily represent positions of NASW.

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# Out With the Old, In With the New

BY LAETITIA CLAYTON



With this first issue of *Social Work Advocates*, we bid farewell to the *NASW News*, which has been the association's newspaper for the past 63 years. But we also usher in a modern publication to reflect the changes and forward movement of the association.

You will still find coverage of NASW's work on behalf of the profession in the magazine's Association News section, while also seeing more news about our 55 chapters and the many schools of social work across the U.S.

We've added a second in-depth feature article, as well as several platforms for more of your voices to be heard. With the Viewpoints and Social Work Voices sections, we will ask you, our members, to respond to different topics in each issue. The hope is that more of you will share your opinions and stories on these pages.

We also are including a fun profile piece, *Backstory*, where we will highlight the various interests and hobbies of our members. In this issue, John Cowart, NASW's Social Worker of the Year in 2016, talks about hiking the Appalachian Trail.

As we were discussing the topic of school violence for the cover story in this first issue, the shooting at Marjorie Stoneman Douglas High School in Parkland, Fla., was behind us and was the latest such shooting.

Since then, nine more students and a teacher were killed in another act of violence at a Texas high school. While there is disagreement on the solutions to these tragic shootings, there is agreement that they must stop.

We decided to focus on the positive—much like the student advocates in Parkland, Fla., did—and discuss possible solutions with social workers who are experts in this area, rather than focusing on the tragedies themselves. We also wanted to acknowledge that shootings are not the only form of violence students face in school.

You will find these articles and more in this inaugural issue of *Social Work Advocates*.

We hope to inspire and uplift you while also informing you and providing tools and ideas to help you do your jobs better. And we want to hear more of

your voices, both in our new sections and in Letters to the Editor.

We hope you enjoy NASW's new magazine, and we welcome your input and feedback. 🔄

Until next time,  
Laetitia

*Laetitia Clayton has a bachelor's degree in journalism from Eastern Kentucky University, and has worked for newspapers, magazines and association publications for the past 20 years as a writer and editor. She became managing editor of *NASW News* in 2011, and enjoys playing a small part in helping social workers change the world for the better.*



**Social Work Advocates senior editor Paul Pace** should be a familiar name with readers. Paul has been reporting on NASW activities for more than 10 years for the NASW News. Besides attending numerous summits, congressional briefings and protests around Washington, D.C., he is the person who calls on members for their expert insight on the changing trends that impact social workers and their clients. Paul grew up in Royal Oak, Mich., and graduated with a BA in journalism from Wayne State University in Detroit.



**Peter Craig** has served as a writer and/or editor for a number of professional associations and other nonprofits, such as the National Automobile Dealers Association, The Nature Conservancy, the Society for Human Resource Management Executive Network and the American Film Institute.



**Alison Laurio, BS, MA**, and a teacher certified in English, journalism, speech communications and drama, taught at the community college and high school levels, then was a journalist for more than 20 years. Before becoming an editor and page designer, she was a reporter covering business and the criminal justice system.



**Will Francis, LMSW**, is the government relations director for NASW's Texas chapter. He earned a master's degree in social work from the University of Texas, Austin, and has a bachelor's degree in English. Will previously worked for Mental Health America of Texas, Child Protective Services, and Travis County Juvenile Probation.



**Alicia Sloan, MPH, MSW, LICSW**, is the research coordinator for the Multiple Sclerosis Center of Excellence at Veterans Affairs Puget Sound Health Care System in Seattle. In her private practice, she provides clinical supervision to social workers, works with the Center for Chronic Illness, and provides video counseling and home visits to clients.

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# Social Media Roundup



**NASW recently posted 110 tweets and 92 retweets. These received the most likes & retweets:**



Results of a recent NASW social media engagement report: Facebook 141,617 likes; LinkedIn follows: 541; LinkedIn group members: 70,810; Twitter followers: 42,233

Facebook Comments:  
"I believe anyone who has chosen social work as their field must believe in human dignity, equal treatment, and basic rights for all. Our occupations are intermingled with the political process, we do have to stand up and speak out for those who cannot. If we do not stand up for the vulnerable populations we represent then who will?"

— Jean M. Hogge, Facebook post.

Thanks for sharing this wonderful brief on the current situation and

evidence-based suggestions to address it in a holistic manner. I'd love to see advocacy for policies and movements towards including more social workers in school settings, full-time, and at competitive rates of pay, to be able to bring multiple professionals together and to have the ability to engage and assist children with stressors, and to enhance their resiliencies.

Love the nod to trauma-informed schools in the brief!

— Jonathan Gill, Facebook post, in response to NASW's statement about the school shooting in Texas.

If we want to teach boys to be better men, we need men to model appropriate behavior and be a present factor in their lives.

— Det. Andrew Houghton, Facebook comment in response to NASW's post about articles related to father's roles in their children's lives, and how they can be found online at NASW's Research Library. NASW members can use the library to find resources to support their practice: [bit.ly/2JUmKwJ](https://bit.ly/2JUmKwJ)

## MEMBER RESPONSE

BY ALICIA SLOAN

For the inaugural issue of *Social Work Advocates*, we asked NASW members to share with us an example of how they have helped give someone hope. Going forward, we will post on our social media platforms a different question or topic for each issue of the magazine and ask our members to write to us with their stories.

I volunteer as a mental health wellness manager with the veteran-based volunteer disaster response organization Team Rubicon. I also work at the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs.

I was on a flood-response operation with Team Rubicon this spring, and a new volunteer who is a female veteran shared with me her story as we were conducting damage assessments and filling sandbags. She told me she has military sexual trauma, traumatic brain injury, physical injuries from the military, and was on the verge of being homeless. She was frustrated with the bureaucracy at the VA, feeling hopeless and not trusting the VA.

I continued talking with her over the days we spent on the flood response. By the end of it, we had a positive rapport and I had gained her trust. I talked with her more about the VA and community resources and offered to help her navigate services. I contacted the VA Homeless Program social worker, who had not heard back from the veteran and had closed the case.

After explaining the veteran's mistrust of the VA, the social worker reopened the case. Between the two of us, we are helping the woman navigate between the VA and community resources.

I also did some quick "ninja" cognitive processing therapy with her to address her negative self talk.

She said she has hope now and feels my support and the support from the VA, as well as from friends she has made at Team Rubicon. She feels less alone now.

## In the Public Eye



Major League Baseball catcher Mike Marjama talks about his years-long struggle with eating

disorders in a story published at the Daily Mail Online.

It notes that the professional athlete developed highly restrictive diet and excessive exercise habits in middle school that escalated into anorexia and bulimia through high school.

The Daily Mail Online spoke with *NASW member and LCSW Bethany Kassar* about the topic.

“Eating disorders are typically thought of as a women’s disease even though men have always had them,” Kassar said.

One-third of the estimated 30 million people in the U.S. who suffer from eating disorders are men, according to the National Eating Disorder Association, the article says. Eating disorders such as anorexia, bulimia and body dysmorphia have the highest mortality rate of any mental illness.

The signs and symptoms are the same for women and men, Kassar said.

She explains that for men there is often a double stigma surrounding eating disorders, but that has been changing in recent years as it becomes more acceptable to admit having the disease.



Three decades before the #MeToo movement, the University of California, San Diego, led the

way against sexual assault, according to an article published in the Los Angeles Times.

The story says *NASW member Nancy Wahlig*, an LCSW, started UC San Diego’s Sexual Assault Resource Center (SARC), the first stand-alone program at the university, 30 years ago. Today, she remains the system’s most senior specialist.

The #MeToo and #TimesUp movements have spiked awareness of the program to new levels.

“We’re like a rocket, and we’re just about to take off,” Wahlig says in the article. “There’s so much momentum to change the culture, and it’s not quieting down.”

The center’s approach is grounded in the work of Alan D. Berkowitz, a psychologist who, by focusing on men’s responsibilities, helped turn around assumptions that rape was a woman’s issue, the story says.

Berkowitz promoted positive, inclusive and empowering practices, Wahlig said.



Kansas child welfare officials were planning to ask lawmakers for additional funding to hire more staff

to investigate cases of child abuse and neglect, even if that means hiring people who are not licensed social workers, according to an article published in the Lawrence Journal-World.

Part of the proposal would use \$5.4 million over three years to hire upward of 200 additional staff who would investigate reports of suspected child abuse and neglect, including people who are not licensed social workers, which is currently a requirement, the story says.

*NASW-Kansas Executive Director Becky Fast* is quoted in the article.

“Lowering standards and requirements in investigations of neglect and abuse is dangerous and can mean the difference between life and death for children,” Fast is quoted as saying. “A far better safeguard would be to pay well-trained, professional social workers what they’re worth, building a system the public can trust.

“Unless Kansas addresses its issues of low salaries, inadequate training and supervision and high caseloads then the end result will be more children placed in harm’s way,” she added.



The Enoch Pratt Free Library in Baltimore partners with the University of Maryland

School of Social Work to provide social services at four branches, according to a story published at [wbaltv.com](http://wbaltv.com).

The program puts social work interns in the libraries to help people with issues that include SNAP benefits, shelter, addiction, immigration, learning differences, health concerns and safety, the story says.

*NASW member Kimberly Street*, a faculty clinical instructor at the university who is with the library, is quoted in the piece.

“Our librarians saw people coming in looking for these services, and they tried to help as much as they could, but they needed specialized help,” Street said. “That’s when we turned to the University of Maryland School of Social Work.”

Participants can get help before a crisis hits, Street explained.

There have been 750 people who have accessed a social work intern in the library since the program started in September, the article says.

To read other media stories like these, visit [socialworkerspeak.org](http://socialworkerspeak.org). 

# Why SNAP is Important

BY WILL FRANCIS

The Trump Administration budget has proposed about \$15 billion in cuts to the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, and legislators also are looking to add work requirements for individuals to be eligible to receive SNAP by including these requirements in the new farm bill.



“SNAP should be there to assist all struggling Americans through trying times by spreading the wealth...”

The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) is shrinking. In 2015, more than 22.5 million households received direct federal support to purchase food. Three years later, that number dropped by almost 2 million, knocking 3.8 million people off the rolls. In 2018 alone, the cost to operate the SNAP program has shrunk by \$1.7 billion.

Do less Americans need assistance buying groceries? Are we on our way to solving the hunger problem in the U.S.?

Actually, more people need help. While the poverty rate in the U.S. has declined, the number of people living in extreme poverty has increased, and SNAP has become an even more important thread in the social safety net. As the income gap rises and housing and basic living costs go up, SNAP

continues to be a vital program millions of Americans turn to.

The problem lies more with how SNAP is portrayed as a political issue. Its detractors categorize it not as a resource for those in need but rather as a welfare program used by out-of-work people who aren't pulling their fair share.

But one in seven Americans are enrolled in SNAP, and half of those recipients are children. More than 40 percent of recipients are in a household with work income. And those that aren't, often had employment income in the recent past.

Social workers should be helping to reframe policy discussions around the social support system by highlighting that SNAP isn't used by households that have resources and are simply gaming the system, but rather it's a program designed to get Americans in need through challenging times.

Data from 2016 indicates that the average SNAP household income was 61 percent of the poverty line. Those are our neighbors working to put food on the table. And without assistance, their families could go hungry.

When President Lyndon B. Johnson signed the Food Stamp Act in 1964, he called it "...one of many sensible and needed steps we have taken to apply the power of America's new abundance to the task of building a better life for every American."

SNAP was founded upon the principle that our country's vast resources should be distributed to the less fortunate. It is a program that should grow as need grows.

Social workers need to lift up their voices and demand that the cuts to the program through funding and eligibility requirements be reversed, and that any farm bill that would further defund the program be stopped.

SNAP should be there to assist all struggling Americans through trying times by spreading the wealth this country is so blessed to have.

*If you have a topic you would like to see addressed in Viewpoints, please contact us at [swadvocates@socialworkers.org](mailto:swadvocates@socialworkers.org).*

# Fordham's Annual Haiti Trip: Getting Better All the Time

BY PETER CRAIG

Students in Fordham University associate professor Marciana Popescu's course exploring "international social development as a dimension of social work practice" are not required to go on its traditional trip to Haiti since the school doesn't pay for it.

"Those who cannot come absolutely get the basic knowledge and skills, and their grades and their contribution to the class are in no way affected," Popescu says about the master's course. But students who are able to come—often after doing some personal fundraising—"basically get an extra course. Because what we do in Haiti usually is work day in, day out and so every living, awake moment is a learning moment."

**What we do in Haiti usually is work day in, day out and so every living, awake moment is a learning moment.**

— Marciana Popescu,  
Fordham University  
Associate Professor

Fordham students get set to launch their trip from the village of Cyvadier in southern Haiti.



That generally means starting in Haiti's capital, Port-au-Prince, visiting relevant government agencies so students can get the macro perspective, then taking a trip to visit schools, clinics, hospitals, microcredit groups, community grassroots organizations and others. There's "some physical work," says Popescu, "but also it's really bringing the skills in—capacity mapping,

problem evaluation, assessment, community needs assessment, and grant writing." This year, in a trip extending from March 29 to April 5, students were also able to raise \$500 to paint a school and supply materials.

Popescu has offered the Haiti trip as part of the class every year since Haiti's massive earthquake in 2010, each time finding new ways to enhance students'

learning while advancing the ongoing project's sustainable development goals.

Among this year's additions to the itinerary were the Espere Community Counseling Center, with its brand-new crisis center focusing on suicide prevention; the Malnutrition Center—Espwa Belancia, an "anti-orphanage" offering children malnutrition intervention and training for parents to help keep kids out



UNIVERSITY OF DENVER

### Using Computer Algorithms for the Greater Good: From Research to Reality

In a 2013 research study on homelessness and associated risk factors, Anamika

Barman-Adhikari and fellow USC doctoral candidates, working with her mentor, Dr. Eric Rice, sought to limit “deviancy training,” where unexpected negative group dynamics in a client group end up undermining the effort.

A simple algorithm created by engineering doctoral

student Aida Rahmatallabi factored in members of the potential group participant’s network—both face-to-face and online. Each potential participant was asked up to 40 increasingly probing questions. Then, says Barman-Adhikari, “the algorithm would take this data, crunch the numbers and



of orphanages; and the Joan Rose Foundation, whose children's after-school program so impressed one student that she's planning to return on her own for three weeks this summer to help set up a database to measure changes in behavioral issues. (After one of the trips a few years ago, a first-year MSW student actually dropped out of Fordham and went back to Haiti to launch an NGO to help match grassroots Haitian organizations with programs in the U.S.)

There are two reviews connected with the Haiti

trip each year. The first is a debriefing right in Haiti on the last night of the visit in which "we look at everything we set out to accomplish and everything that was accomplished and then we look at the next steps," says Popescu. And back home, students who were on the trip give detailed presentations about their experience,

Clockwise from bottom left: Professor Popescu (center left in blue shirt) with her students and the Mizak Mamas, whose initiatives include a microcredit group; INAAF Preschool, site of a Fordham painting project; Professor Popescu's 16-year-old daughter, Fiona, and friend; and a mosaic in Jacmel.

### For the first time, there will be an audio podcast of the trip as well as two videos

— Marciana Popescu, Fordham University Associate Professor

benefiting not only classmates who were unable to go but any other Fordham social work students who want to attend the session.

One exciting offshoot of this year's visit to Haiti, adds Popescu: For the first time, there will be an audio podcast of the trip as well as two videos, which will soon be available on the school's website. 🎧

tell us by what percentage deviancy training might increase or decrease."

This fall, says Barman-Adhikari, now an assistant professor at the University of Denver Graduate School of Social Work, the algorithm is emerging from the lab to address homelessness and

its relationship to drug abuse. Working with Denver-area homeless shelter operator Urban Peak, her team will undertake a substance abuse curriculum, with 40 homeless youths in the experimental group and 40 in the control group (chosen the traditional way—at random).

But at what point does artificial intelligence end and human social work practice kick in? "I think AI can only be as good as the parameters the human social worker provides," says Barman-Adhikari. "Essentially, it's 'garbage in, garbage out.'" 🎧

## Top Schools Speak Out

### THE U.S. NEWS & WORLD REPORT LIST

Deans from the top three social work schools on the 2018 U.S. News & World Report list of the best ones in the country have some ideas about how their programs got there:

#### No. 1—University of Michigan

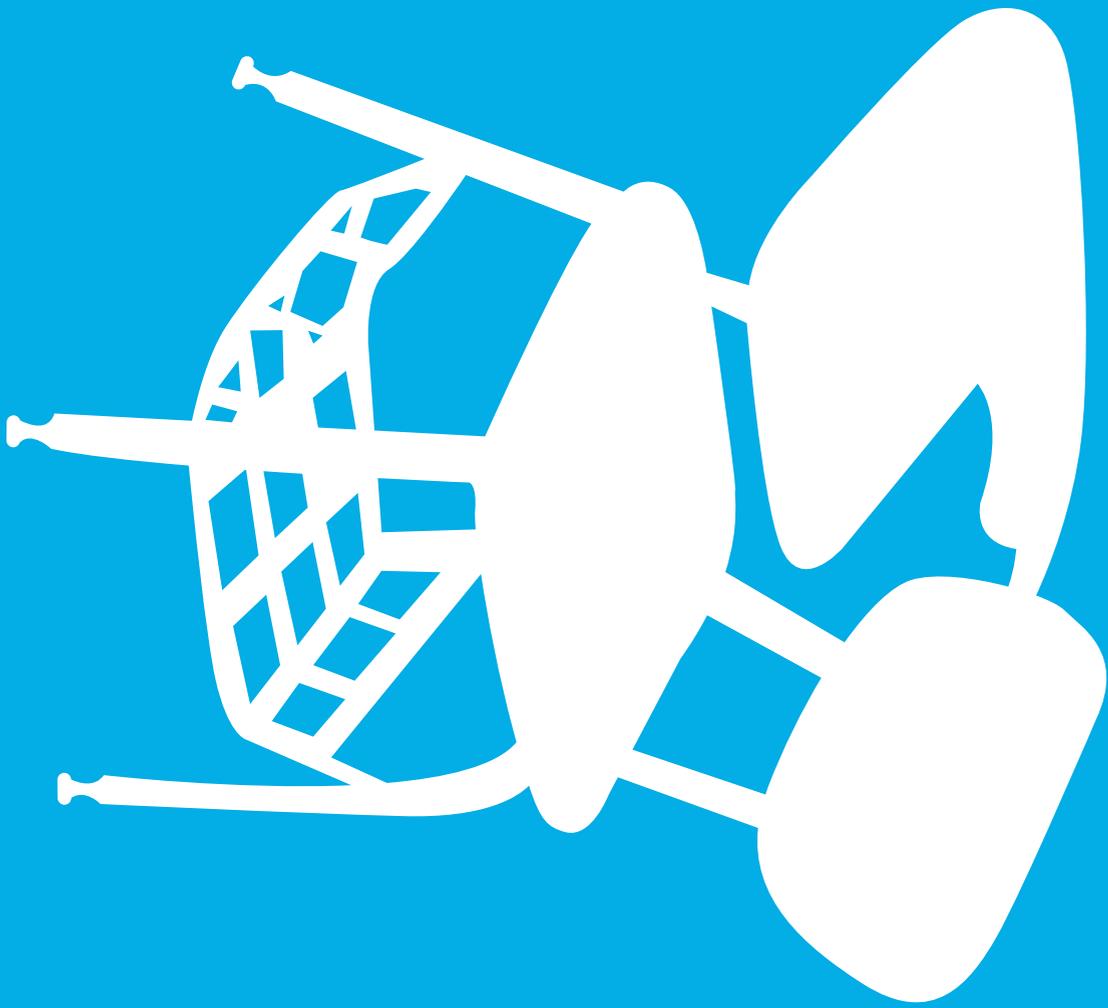
Dean Lynn Videka: "(1) By educating leaders who go on to important roles that make a big impact on society; (2) a strong, interdisciplinary curriculum that offers excellent preparation for micro and macro practitioners; (3) faculty recognized as knowledge development leaders in the profession."

#### No. 2—Brown School at Washington University in St. Louis

Dean Mary McKay: "Our commitment to evidence-based practice and policy brings together the best that social work, public health and social policy have to offer—allowing for the development of innovative interventions aimed at positive social change."

#### No. 3 (tied)—University of California, Berkeley

Dean Jeffrey L. Edleson: "We are a small but mighty faculty consistently ranked as one of the most productive groups of scholars in the country and reflecting a strong social science tradition focused on evidence-based practices. In addition, Berkeley has always been a hotbed of innovation and social movements."



# VIOLENCE IN SCHOOLS

## PREVENTION IS KEY

BY ALISON LAURIO

When a young girl saw a game of tag for the first time, she was afraid.

She did not understand that touching and running away was part of playing a game, said Heather Alden, school social worker at EXPO Elementary School. The youngster's family had immigrated to St. Paul, Minn., from a refugee camp after escaping a country embroiled in civil war.

"A lot of East Africans come from places with a lot of trauma," Alden said. "You have to teach them how to play and that it's safe. That's something you don't think about, but it's important because they don't necessarily know how to play."

As schools across the country cope with violence and its prevention, school social workers are instrumental, helping students with recovery or fears it could happen to them. They are at the forefront of safety planning and drills. And they are working to prevent school violence before it happens, because, Alden said, the way to prevent school violence is to teach kids the appropriate way to interact with each other in elementary school.

# MORE THAN 187,000 STUDENTS ATTENDING AT LEAST 193 PRIMARY OR SECONDARY SCHOOLS HAVE EXPERIENCED A SHOOTING ON CAMPUS DURING SCHOOL HOURS.

## RISING TIDE

“Beginning with Columbine in 1999, more than 187,000 students attending at least 193 primary or secondary schools have experienced a shooting on campus during school hours,” according to a year-long Washington Post analysis. “This means that the number of children who have been shaken by gunfire in the places they go to learn exceeds the population of Eugene, Ore., or Fort Lauderdale, Fla.,” the Washington Post states in its story “Scarred by School Shootings.” The paper updates its statistics periodically, and those figures were updated March 25.

The National Center for Education Statistics’ July 2017 report “Crime, Violence, Discipline, and Safety in U.S. Public Schools,” based on data gathered in the 2015 to 2016 school year, found the rate of violent incidents per 1,000 students was 27 in middle schools, 16 in high schools and 15 in primary schools.

“About 39 percent of schools reported at least one student threat of physical attack without a weapon, compared with 9 percent of schools that reported such a threat with a weapon,” it states.

Seventy-four percent of suburban schools and 73 percent in cities reported they had formal programs to prevent or reduce violence “that included social emotional learning training for students,” while town schools reported a 62 percent rate and rural areas reported 51 percent.

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“About 39 percent of schools reported at least one student threat of physical attack without a weapon, compared with 9 percent of schools that reported such a threat with a weapon”

**NATIONAL CENTER FOR EDUCATION STATISTICS’ JULY 2017 REPORT**

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Ninety-five percent of schools reported having student lockdown drills, 92 percent had evacuation procedures and 76 percent reported having shelter-in-place procedures.

Other data cover threats, weapon possession, bullying and cyberbullying.

## PREVENTION WORKS

At least 50 percent of all children experience some form of violence during their school careers, and some say that number is even higher, said Richard F. Catalano Jr.

“The rates aren’t necessarily pervasive, but think about the children—the victims or the perpetrators,” he said.

Catalano, PhD, is the Bartley Dobb Professor for the Study and Prevention of Violence at the Social Development Research Group at the University of Washington School of Social Work in Seattle. He is co-founder of the research group and is a professor of social work and adjunct professor of both sociology and education.

The propensity toward violence starts at about age 10 or 11, peaks around age 17 and begins falling in the 20s. The frontal cortex are not fully developed until about age 25, he said.

“As they gain more cognitive skill, the rates go down,” Catalano said. “On the other hand, there are certain risk and protective factors.”

What children experience in their communities, families and peer groups influences their behavior, he said.

“If there are good family practices, it’s less likely they will be involved in violence,” Catalano said. “If kids feel protected, if their family, school and community have strong attachments and recognize them for good behavior, they’re less likely as well. But there’s no silver bullet.”



There are a large number of proven prevention programs that work, he said, pointing to the Chicago Child-Parent Centers, which provide socio-emotional preparation for youngsters ages 3 to 5 to prepare them for school.

Blueprints Programs focus on prevention, and their 38 programs have shown strong evidence of success, Catalano said.

One size does not fit all, but Blueprints is a good source for teachers and social workers to find a good program for their setting, he said.

“Building kids’ social and emotional capacity can prevent violence in the future,” Catalano said. “Studies show many years in the future—15 years later—they show less violence.”

“To cut to the chase, we have interventions that can be done in preschool and primary school and middle school and high school. What we don’t have is the political will to put these things in place that can prevent things like the school shootings we’ve been having over a period of time. Why aren’t we doing it? That’s the question.”

## **SCHOOL SOCIAL WORK**

Libby Nealis, MSSW, and director of policy and advocacy at the School Social Work Association of America, said some states, and schools within some jurisdictions, do not employ social workers. Many have counselors, who largely hold academic roles, like talking to students about grades and going to college.

“Work in schools is very scattered for social workers,” she said. “The more funding a school has, the more services it can provide.”

Actions like bullying, threats and fights are all red flags, and they need to be addressed before they elevate and students become a threat to themselves or others. And social workers do all those things well, Nealis said.

“What’s needed is an elevated discussion, lots of funding and training,” Nealis said. “Teachers need it too. They don’t

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“Actions like bullying, threats and fights are all red flags, and they need to be addressed before they elevate and students become a threat to themselves or others.”

**LIBBY NEALIS, POLICY AND ADVOCACY DIRECTOR,  
SCHOOL SOCIAL WORK ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA**

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understand the effects on a trauma-affected brain.”

School funding is up to the states and local districts.

There is no direct funding from the federal government, she said, although the new education bill is “huge.” It’s a \$1.1 billion program, and 20 percent of it is targeted for school mental health and safety.

“In response to Parkland, many schools have put a lot of money into equipment and school resource officers,” Nealis said. “A lot of priorities need to be set, and social workers need to be vocal. They can try partnering with the justice folks, making sure they’re properly trained. There are way more of them than social workers or mental health people.”

## **AGAPE HIGH SCHOOL**

Christy McCoy, MSW, LICSW, is board secretary and legislative chair for SSWAA, and secretary and legislative chair for the Minnesota School Social Work Association, where she is also past president.

“It’s a crucial time right now, a time for a lot of questions,” said McCoy, the school social worker at Agape High School in St. Paul. “Sadly, it’s taken tragedy for us to take time to have this dialogue. At all kinds of schools, all school employees prepare for potential emergencies and hope we do not have to enact some plans.”

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“The girls get to know who they’re sitting next to every day...I like to take it to a deeper level and have students share their traditions, values and beliefs.”

**CHRISTY MCCOY, SCHOOL SOCIAL WORKER,  
AGAPE HIGH SCHOOL IN ST. PAUL, MINN**

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School social workers collaborate with counselors, nurses, school resource officers, and everyone in the school office so any needed response would be immediate. Social workers would provide follow-up services to members of the school community affected by trauma, she said.

Her school is for girls who have babies or are pregnant, and last year, one of their graduates was murdered by the father of her child, McCoy said.

“It was one year after she graduated, so she was no longer a student, but we had students who knew her, teachers and staff who knew her,” she said.

McCoy worked with the administrator and school counselor to come up with a strategic plan and decide what kind of support would be provided to students and staff.

“We provided individual support for students—trauma informed care, and group therapy,” she said. “We’re in a pivotal position to help with crises, but what we do afterwards is help with pain and fears.”

She also does “a lot” of preventive work.

On regular school days, McCoy does group therapy to help students learn coping skills. She also works with families to deal with whatever issues they may be going through.

“If we see mental illness or bullying happen, we know how to engage and how to prevent it,” she said. “We also provide a lot of emotional learning competencies.”

“No. 1 is, we’ve established a community and have interventions in place. We provide the opportunity so kids feel valued and heard.”

As a team, they have implemented restorative practices in case of a conflict. If something happens, students, family members and teachers can all be brought in.

“It’s been really effective,” McCoy said. “School social workers have the expertise to engage the system with effective practices. For us, being that bridge and making sure things get done, it’s ongoing. It’s not just one shot and done.”

No one is profiled, but they pay attention to warning signs, like things said in student writings, so they can be aware of

and deal with anything that might become a problem, she said. “One of our roles is to empower the school staff to be aware and engage with students too,” McCoy said. “It could be the custodian—any staff member—because that’s what creates a safe learning community: relationships.”

Strategic supervision is utilized. In the lunchroom, for example, teachers and staff should walk around the cafeteria and engage with students so they know what’s going on. In the hallway, don’t just stand there. Engage with students, have conversations, she said.

McCoy said if something happens and students are asked why didn’t they say something, you do not want them to say “I felt invisible. I thought I didn’t matter.”

To address some issues, they can provide mental health service delivery at the school and bring in the family.

“It’s important to establish community partnership,” McCoy said. “You have to understand the community to work with it. You have to know not all families have the same cultural values, and they might not be aligned with what they see as their child’s mental health. We work to make sure we can be that bridge so we’re able to get those kids back into class and be academically successful.”

She believes it is imperative to partner with and collectively build support around students, families, the school and communities.

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“When [the girls] have the opportunity to share their stories, it’s really powerful, not only for [them], but for our own community.”

**CHRISTY MCCOY**

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“That’s where I think we can be most effective in preventing tragedy from happening,” McCoy said. “It takes a lot of training, trust and evaluation, and at the end of the year, more evaluation. What can we do better next year? I think that’s all important.”

Her entire career has been in alternative high school settings.

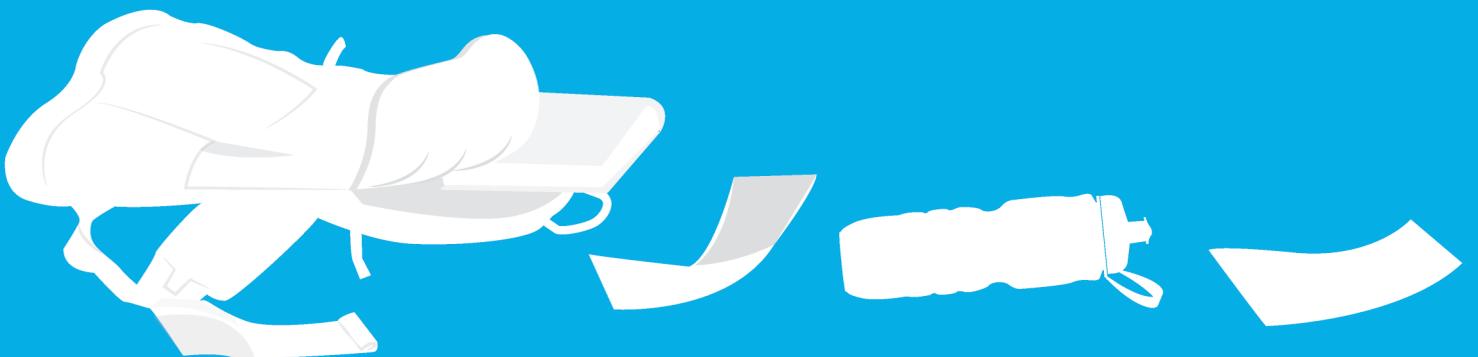
“Some of those families, by the time they get to those schools, are kind of disenfranchised from school systems,” McCoy said. “My job is to re-engage them and build some trust.”

She developed Culture Day, where a student brings in family members, and other students hear them talk about who they are and where they come from.

**"WE PROVIDE THE  
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**- CHRISTY MCCOY, SCHOOL SOCIAL WORKER**

**“...ALL KIDS NEED TO BE SEEN...”**



“The girls get to know who they’re sitting next to every day,” McCoy said. “I like to take it to a deeper level and have students share their traditions, values and beliefs. It’s a journey.”

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“Several [students] decided to write letters to (U.S.) Sen. (Amy) Klobuchar about gun violence prevention and what makes a safe school.”

**CHRISTY MCCOY**

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“Another thing: it’s a learning experience. They’re doing presentations, using speaking skills. They’re doing Power Point presentations. For girls who have experienced trauma, they’re using those to tell a story.”

One family was from Burma. They fled after seeing family members killed and dismembered in front of them, leaving their homes and hiding in the jungle with nothing but the clothes on their backs, she said.

“When they have the opportunity to share their stories, it’s really powerful, not only for the girls, but for our own community,” McCoy said.

When school shootings happen elsewhere, some are afraid.

“It’s a normal trauma response that can impact attendance,” McCoy said. “That’s my role. The first thing is to reassure them that when they come to school they’re safe.”

The school has a controlled entrance, visitors must show IDs, and lockdown drills are practiced to make sure students are safe if something does happen.

After Parkland, just a few students participated in the local march.

“What was really neat is most of the students decided they wanted to go a different route,” McCoy said. “Several decided to write letters to (U.S.) Sen. (Amy) Klobuchar about gun violence prevention and what makes a safe school.”

Then she selected two students and had them present a talk on what makes this school feel safe for you at the annual Day on the Hill.

“They actually got to meet the mayor of St. Paul,” McCoy said. “It was wonderful for them to have that opportunity.”

She believes school social work provides the opportunity to embrace a leadership role, and always has emphasized the importance of advocacy, “not only for our school, but for social justice and equitable resources for all.”

McCoy said that means social workers “have to take it outside, and you have to talk about it. Think about DACA. These people have escaped. They’ve worked hard for our society. They’ve engaged at the community level, the state level and nationally. Our job as social workers is to advocate for all. I think that’s just as important and a part of our work.”

“I feel very grateful to be able to do this work. I feel it’s not a job, it’s a calling.”

McCoy received the Career Achievement Award this spring from the MSSWA.

## EXPO ELEMENTARY

In grade schools, “violence has different degrees in impact, so we try to keep it small by teaching kids how to work through social interaction,” said Alden, MSW, LICSW, and president of the Midwest School Social Work Council.

Children are taught how to play, celebrate differences, learn about each other and honor each other, and they are allowed the space for that to happen, she said.

“We use the RTI model,” Alden said. “We run friendship groups and do social modeling, like on how to work through a problem.”

The types of violence they see can include bullying—like triangulation, when two friends exclude a third friend.

“We typically don’t see weapons in elementary, but we will see some fistfights from time to time,” Alden said. “Basically, everything in elementary is really small.”

“We spend a lot of time building community in the classroom, creating norms so they know how to behave and do better.”

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“Lots of times kids say something they don’t mean. We have to figure out does the child intend to do harm... You have to really know the culture of kids and their families and communities.”

**HEATHER ALDEN, SCHOOL SOCIAL WORKER  
AT EXPO ELEMENTARY SCHOOL IN ST. PAUL, MINN.**

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Safety measures include lockdown drills and preparatory training for students.

“It’s pretty scary for them, but we do it in a way so they know they’re safe and we have a plan,” Alden said.

**“WE NEED TO  
GET IN THERE  
AND DO  
THE WORK.”**

**– HEATHER ALDEN, SCHOOL SOCIAL WORKER**

“Adults model behavior so they know they’re OK and safe.”

They do lots of integrating with parents so they will be mindful of what kids are exposed to at home, she said.

“For example, after Parkland happened, CNN looped it, replaying it over and over again,” Alden said. “Kids thought it was happening again and again because they did not understand. We explained that to parents and talked about information kids were exposed to.”

The kind of triage they most likely do is if they hear a child say “Oh, I just want to die” or “I’m gonna kill this person,” she said.

“We spend time with the kids and talk to them about how to express their views appropriately,” Alden said. “We tell them: A: they have to figure out what the appropriate words are to explain how they’re feeling, and B: they have to understand when they make comments like that, they have implications.”

“Lots of times kids say something they don’t mean. We have to figure out does the child intend to do harm and help them understand that how they say things matters. You have to really know the culture of kids and their families and communities.”

The EXPO population has a mix of families, from some who have higher opportunities to those who are homeless, and St. Paul is a city with many cultures and many spoken languages, she said.

“It’s a beautiful mix of kids and families from all over the world,” Alden said. “Many have challenging histories and trauma.”

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“It’s to create space for a lot of students who have had a lot of trauma...It’s the most amazing program, and it’s working...It’s so awesome, and it really makes a huge difference.”

**HEATHER ALDEN, SCHOOL SOCIAL WORKER**

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There are 750 children and she is the only social worker, but “we have a counselor,” Alden said. “I take the more clinical cases and she works a lot with special-needs kids. We divide it up.”

Alden also plays a role in the community, working with families and doing home visits. But her “favorite thing to do” is a project she developed called Project Connection, a monthly school-based mentoring program with 25 at-risk kids, their siblings and families and school staff including the principal, nurse, custodian and teachers.

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The most important things about preventing school violence are: building relationships with kids and families; being available, and continuing relationships, because all kids need to be seen; and remembering the ones highest at risk and feeling disenfranchised are the ones who aren’t seen.

**HEATHER ALDEN**

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The kids feel like “it’s my place,” families see it’s a good place to be, and it’s “awesome” for the staff, she said.

In January, they all went sledding. Another time, they went to a Twins game. They built kites and flew them in April, and in May, they had a barbecue.

“It’s to create space for a lot of students who have had a lot of trauma,” Alden said. “It’s the most amazing program, and it’s working. We’ve done it for eight or nine years, and now more parents show up for programs at school. It’s so awesome, and it really makes a huge difference.”

She believes the most important things about preventing school violence are: building relationships with kids and families; being available, and continuing relationships, because all kids need to be seen; and remembering the ones highest at risk and feeling disenfranchised are the ones who aren’t seen.

Near the top of its web page titled “Role of School Social Worker,” the SSWAA has a quote from Alden, their 2012 National School Social Worker of the Year.

“We need to get in there and do the work. We may do our work in a classroom, at a table, under a table, outside of a home on the front porch or through a screened door. We may do our work with puppets and clay or graffiti and spoken word, before school or during lunch...nonetheless, we do the work.” 🎧

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You Tube





# Digital Devices and Social Media: The Good, the Bad and the Ugly

BY ALISON LAURIO

When his son said “Dad, I want to write a newsletter,” Jonathan B. Singer sat down with the 6-year-old, who he allows to use his Chromebook with permission.

“He types a title, selects the font, selects speaking, and in two or three hours, he has a four-page newsletter,” said Singer, associate professor at the Loyola University School of Social Work in Chicago and founder and host of the Social Work Podcast.

“He wanted to insert a picture, so we find a photo and I talk about copyrights,” Singer said. “Honestly, when I think back, I’m not a better person because I spent five hours typing on a typewriter and using White Out. My son is learning the same thing, and there’s no difference except he gets his newsletter in an hour instead of a day.”

There is debate over whether youths’ use of technology and social media on phones and devices is harmful or helpful. Many agree it is both: there are concerns and there are benefits. They also agree it is up to parents to be aware of what their children use, how often they use it and what they are doing on it. And, adults need to continue monitoring use—and perhaps place limits on it.



## ALERT

It's a great idea to monitor teens' usage of media to understand what they are doing, where they are going, and how much time is really being spent on networks."

### Teacher Poll

A Gallup poll of U.S. teachers in March found mixed opinions on digital-device use by students.

Forty-two percent of teachers believe the effects of digital devices on students' education is mostly helpful. Twenty-eight percent believe it is mostly harmful, and 30 percent said it is neither.

"Meanwhile, an overwhelming majority of teachers in the U.S. (69 percent) believe students' use of digital devices has mostly harmful effects on students' mental health; a slightly smaller share of teachers (55 percent) express this concern with respect to students' physical health," Gallup states.

The poll notes 2015 research by Pearson, which found "majorities of students at all grade levels own a smartphone, including 53 percent of elementary school students, 65 percent of middle school students and 82 percent of high school students.

### A Teen's View

In 2015, Omaha North High Magnet School student Keli Wheeler, a participant in the Nebraska College Preparatory Academy, concluded in a paper titled "Social Media and the Effect on Youth" that "negative impacts of social media are starting to surface making procrastination easier and sleeping harder. These issues can only grow and increase the way that the Internet does."

"It's a great idea to monitor teens' usage of media to understand what they are doing, where they are going, and how much time is really being spent on networks."

### Concerns

Jessica Denise Hallman Holton, MSW, LCSW, said in her private practice she is seeing some addictive qualities, not only with adolescents, but with adults too.

"I've seen it across all ages, from adolescence—which is pretty big—and also with adults, when social media becomes a priority over other things," she said.

Holton, past president of NASW-N.C., past chair and member of NASW's Alcohol, Tobacco and Other Drugs Specialty Practice Section Committee, vice president of Addiction Professionals of North Carolina and chair of its

Professional Standards and Best Practices Committee, is researching the neuroscience of addiction for a presentation to clinicians at a nearby military base who want to learn more about process disorder.

"Social media programmers are really, really smart," she said. "They target the reward system in our brain. It all deals with rewards."

FMRI scans enable you to see the part of the brain light up when it gets hijacked, Holton said.

"What I observe in folks is classic," she said. "They're using that to cope or to make themselves numb. It's across the board."

The frontal lobes in youth brains—the part that likes to feel good—are not fully developed, Holton said, and social media is programmed to make the user feel good. Add the facts teens want to fit in and do not want to feel out of place, they can stay on social media until they get that good feeling.

"Social media programmers are really, really smart...They target the reward system in our brain. It all deals with rewards."

"The good feeling comes from getting dopamine, a highly addictive hormone," she said.

It is a problem if social media is used as an avoidance tool or the person does not want to do anything else, Holton said.

With teens it's mostly avoidance, like when they're feeling anxiety before a project is due, she said.

"They get online...and ah," Holton said. "You have to help the kid understand what they're avoiding and what they get rewarded for, and help them understand they get other rewards from giving other skills use."

Teens should be encouraged to talk to their peers in person, not just on social media, and parents can use social media as a reward, she said. And, the phone can be put in the other room.

It is possible self-esteem is involved in social media use, said Daniel J. Flannery, PhD, the Semi J. and Ruth W. Begun Professor and Director of the Begun Center for Violence

Prevention, Research and Education at the Jack, Joseph and Morton Mandel School of Applied Social Services at Case Western Reserve University in Cleveland. He also is adjunct professor in the School of Medicine and the departments of psychiatry and pediatrics.

“With all the technology that’s available now on social media, kids are experiencing things that are more immediate and more intense.”

“I certainly don’t think that link has been firmly established, but I think it’s possible kids with low or lacking self-esteem can spend more time on social media because they can control who they are,” he said. “Self-esteem is about a lot of different things: being a student, a kid and in a family. I don’t think if they have low self-esteem in one area they’re at risk.”

There are warning signs of overuse parents can watch for, like anything that prevents kids from doing daily activities, Flannery said.

“If they’re not interacting with others—peers or family—because they’re spending excessive time on social media and you see an impact on grades or behavior, it’s become a problem,” he said.

Flannery said his children, who now are young adults, used to use cell phones a lot. Now they do not like talking on the phone and are not comfortable having long conversations. Phone conversations, unlike texting or tweeting, allow you to get the tone, the emotion, the affect of the words, he said.

“You don’t get the sense of that in a text,” he said. “That’s the downside.”

Parents should notice the changes in technology use, from the 1990s cell phone use to today, when many are using social media including texting, tweeting and Facebook to connect.

“The apps they’re using are much more prevalent, and it’s how they’re spending time,” Flannery said. “With all the technology that’s available now on social media, kids are

experiencing things that are more immediate and more intense. Things like school shootings, mass shootings, natural disasters. And that stuff is repeated over and over and over. It’s constantly popping up all the time.”

“Maybe some kids who don’t let things bother them are OK. But some are more sensitive and have a hard time when dealing with the overexposure of sensitive stuff. If that’s what you think is normal, your sense of security can be off-kilter.”

If it’s a school shooting, no matter where it is, when they see it over and over on social media, they might not feel safe and may not want to go to school, he said.

From video games to TV and movies to the Internet and social media, violence is everywhere, Flannery said.

“I don’t think we can get away from the responsibility we have as adults, parents, teachers, caregivers, to keep our eyes and ears open to what’s going on, because some kids may not handle it well,” he said.

Singer, PhD, LCSW, believes for some youth, there is an experience that is similar to addiction.

“Some using technology such as games and getting feedback has a similar effect as a slot machine,” he said. “I see youth and technology like (author) Danah Boyd. Youth are not addicted to technology. If anything, they are addicted to each other. That speaks to something that’s true for every generation: teenagers want to hang out with each other.”

Because adolescents’ brains are hardwired to seek out rewards and risks, they are neurologically prone to addiction. They have intense longings and feel euphoria at a first kiss or bliss if someone says “I like you,” and their brain is hardwired to seek out those feelings, Singer said.

“The Internet and technology is built by programmers who use the same techniques as with gambling,” he said. “The mechanism of addiction is similar regardless of the thing one gets addicted to.”

Singer said it is really hard to do anything these days without technology, but if an adolescent has FOMO, or fear of missing out, and is constantly checking to see, “there is a problem.”

“It’s nuanced,” he said. “It’s why you’re doing it and what that means.”



#### ALERT

Youth are not addicted to technology. If anything, they are addicted to each other. That speaks to something that’s true for every generation: teenagers want to hang out with each other.”



## Safety Issues

The issue of safety has two sides. When a problem or crisis comes up, whether it is relatively small like a teen getting a flat tire on the car or running late in getting home, to some of the school shootings where children are talking to or texting their parents while it is happening, having that connection through technology is helpful.

"We all probably feel a little bit safer if there's a phone to give parents real-time updates," Holton said. "Absolutely, having these devices helps."

On the other side, she said, is something important.

"With pornography, the kids who are watching it are younger and younger," Holton said. "It's at their fingertips. It's accessible. It's giving adolescent boys a false perception of what sex is and girls a false perception of how they're supposed to act."

"We've done a horrible job by not talking to kids about sex. We have to talk about sex with kids."

Singer agrees, and also said for 10-year-olds to stumble on and take quizzes on things like "What kind of person are you?" exposes kids to things that are not developmentally appropriate. "These are things parents should be looking out for."

Flannery said social media and cell phones are useful beyond cases where something goes awry, like their child getting sick at school and needing to come home.

"I do think the advent of cell phones has been a positive for parents interested in monitoring their kids and staying in contact with them," he said. "But, even good kids will do things to evade their parents."

"Kids are savvy, and adolescents can be manipulative if you want to know what they are doing. Some parents put a tracking device on their children's phone. It's a useful tool if you're a parent, particularly if you're a single parent with multiple kids."

## Positives

There are good things about the connectivity technology provides, Flannery said.

"Social media allows children to be exposed to more people and more stuff in the outside world," he said. "My 16-year-old has a Chromebook that's required for school. It has access to information, digital art and

things like that. People aren't avoiding the technology and the benefit of it."

A benefit for parents is knowing they have the capacity to stay in touch with their children, he said.

"There's comfort in knowing you are able to contact them if something happens," Flannery said. "It's much safer if something happens because you're able to get in touch more quickly. If your child is disabled, that's especially important."

Singer said he has two sons who are 6 years old and a daughter, age 10.

"If they want to know how much a blue whale weighs, they can go to Google. It's something they know they have—all the collected wisdom of the last 100,000 years at their fingertips."

"They don't have to put the brakes on their fascination of the world," he said. "If they want to know how much a blue whale weighs, they can go to Google. It's something they know they have—all the collected wisdom of the last 100,000 years at their fingertips."

"They're going to learn things that we can never imagine. To them, knowledge is theirs for the taking."

Although social media use might cut down on face-to-face interaction, children still are having interpersonal communication, Singer said. For example, take a 13-year-old who goes to a fairly affluent school who is not interested in or cannot afford many of the things classmates do.

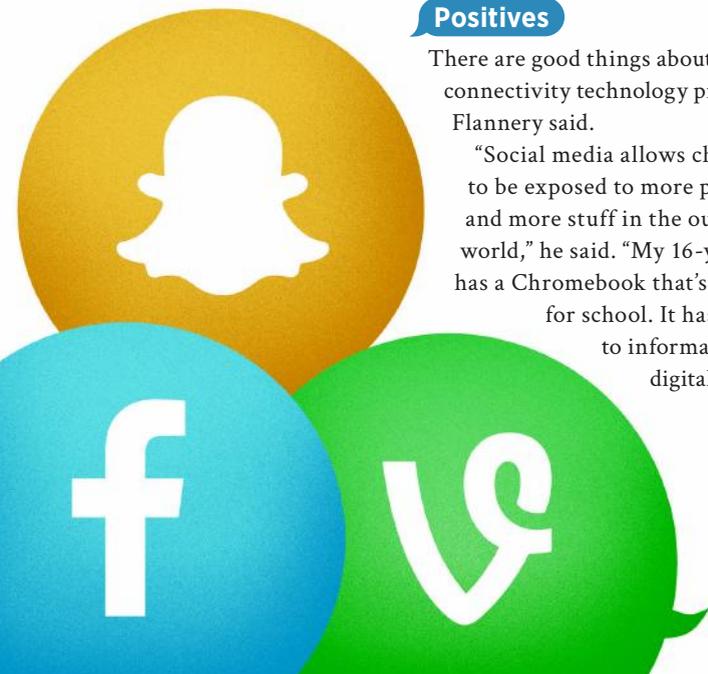
If that student hangs out online and shares his interests, like snapping photos and his favorite music, that is interpersonal connection, he said. It's just happening online.

"At age 13, I wanted to go to the roller rink with friends or go to the arcade with friends and play games," Singer said. "Those are all things kids are doing online. The things they are doing are the same, it's just seen differently."

Another way kids communicate with each other is through apps, he said.

"They're using Instagram as a way of sharing," Singer said. "Some teens create a mini movie of 'my day' that lasts for 24 hours and then is deleted."

Apps have become important in health too, through the development of apps that explicitly target certain behaviors, like those that help kids develop mindfulness skills or others that help in a crisis. There is a suicide-prevention app for those at risk that can walk them through why it's worth living, he said.





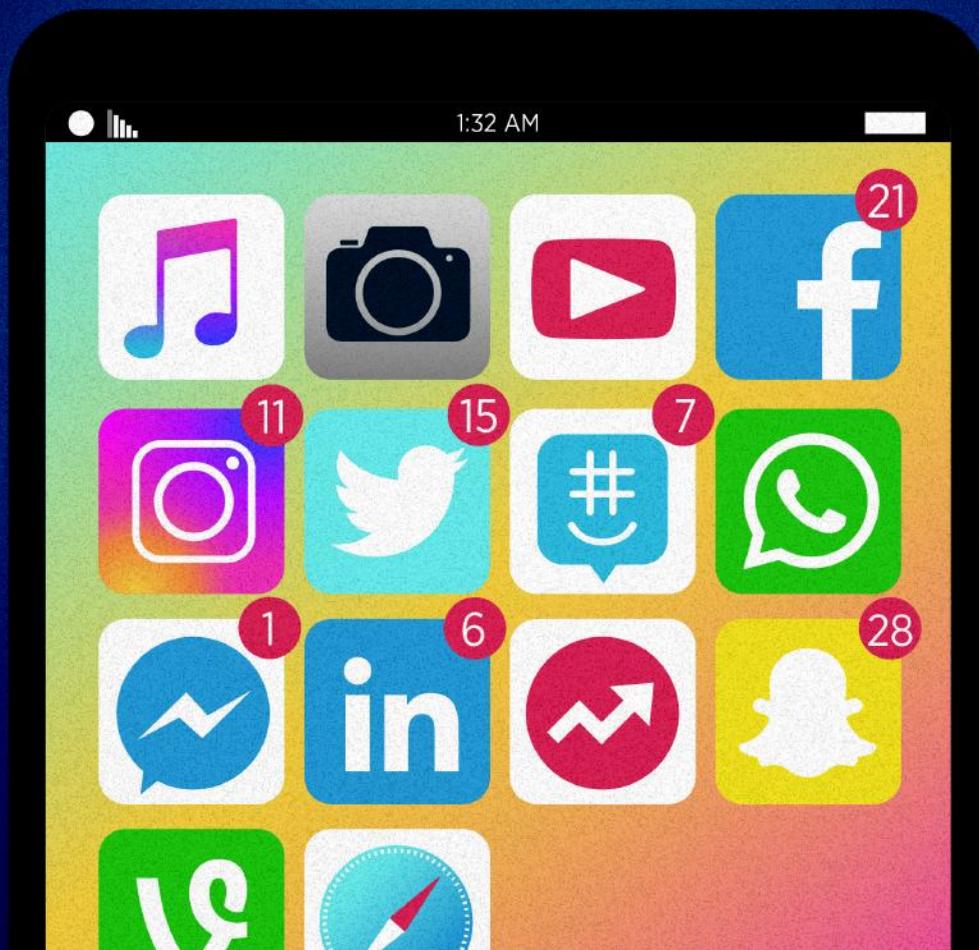
“ ALERT

Even good kids will do things to evade their parents. Kids are savvy, and adolescents can be manipulative if you want to know what they are doing.”



### ALERT

I think our responsibility as parents is to recognize how our kids are doing. If they're spending a lot of time on the Internet and they seem depressed, ask what's going on. Always set a time in the evening to unplug. All those things matter."



## A Parent's Role

Some teens might be going on the Internet to look at pictures of people cutting, burning or starving themselves, Singer said, and that's why parents have to know what technology is on their childrens' phones and know how they are using that information.

Because teenagers are teenagers and their brains are developing, parents need to assist them, Holton said.

"First and foremost is modeling," she said. "If a parent tells them one thing but does the opposite, they watch that. Everybody needs a bit of a break from technology, and parents definitely have to model that by showing we don't have to be on the phone all the time."

Parents also need to make sure children are not using social media as an escape, Holton said. They should know who they are talking to, what they are doing and whether that is helpful or harmful. Then, they need to set and explain rules.

"Of course, the grown-ups have to follow those rules too," she said.

Taking away social media is probably one of the most used punishments, Singer said.

"It used to be 'you're grounded' or 'you can't go outside,' but that doesn't work these days," he said.

"...once you give a 16-year-old access to the World Wide Web and all that's on it, you have to remember not everything on it are things you want kids exposed to."

Singer said there are things parents can do to monitor use: know what apps are on the phone, know what those apps do and know what the risks are for those apps.

Parents also should know how kids are using those apps, he said, and websites like Common Sense Media have app reviews.

Flannery said once you give a 16-year-old access to the World Wide Web and all that's on it, you have to remember not everything on it are things you want kids exposed to. They have to be aware what their kids are looking at.

The keywords are awareness and monitoring, he said.

"Parents should exert controls depending on the age of the child," Flannery said. "They should monitor what social media is used and the time it's used. First they need to make sure it's appropriate."

"I think our responsibility as parents is to recognize how our kids are doing. If they're spending a lot of time on the Internet and they seem depressed, ask what's going on. Always set a time in the evening to unplug. All those things matter."



## ALERT

Everybody needs a bit of a break from technology, and parents definitely have to model that by showing we don't have to be on the phone all the time."

It's OK to take away the phones from time to time, and always know what their passwords are, he said.

When it comes to apps that can improve quality of life, Singer pointed to the Virtual Hope Box, an app developed by the military for soldiers.

"It takes the old idea of putting good memories in an old cigar box—things like pictures, ticket stubs, things we used to do, things that made you happy, things that gave you hope," he said.

The app allows that same collection of good memories and keeps them online.

"It allows you to collect things that are very personal and very life affirming," Singer said. "If you're feeling sad and wonder if this world is for you, you can open it up, look at them and you feel better."

"And it's something you carry with you all the time because it's on your phone." 🔄

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# Mental Health Treatment is Critical in Criminal Justice System

BY PAUL R. PACE

People with severe mental illness are four times overrepresented in the nation's correctional system in comparison to the overall population, says Robert Morgan, professor of psychology at Texas Tech University.

A person with mental illness is three times more likely to be incarcerated than they are to be hospitalized, he said. "That's a striking statistic." "Our correctional facilities are, in fact, mental health centers," he said. "The three largest providers of mental health services in the U.S. are Cook County Jail, L.A. County Jail and Houston County Jail. Corrections is where individuals are receiving mental health services."



We need to target issues that are putting people at risk both for mental health contact and improving their quality of life but also target this population for risk for future contact with the justice system."

Morgan was a member of an expert panel assembled at a congressional briefing to put a spotlight on the need for improved mental health care of people involved with the criminal justice system.

The briefing, "Innovations and Challenges in Providing Mental Health Services to People in Prison and Those Reentering the Community," was hosted by a partnership that included NASW, the American Psychological Association, the Legal Action Center and the Association of State Correctional Administrators.

NASW CEO Angelo McClain moderated the panel discussion, which included an audience of congressional staff.

The APA notes the prison systems face numerous challenges in providing mental health care to individuals in custody.

As Morgan explained, vast disparities exist between the general and prison populations for those who have a mental health disorder.

While about 18 percent of the general population may experience a mental health disorder or symptoms, the prison population, in comparison, is at about 45 percent, the APA notes.

Major depression among the general population is estimated at 6.7 percent. The prison population is at 16 percent. Serious psychosocial distress among the general population is at 3.4 percent, while the prison population is at 14.6 percent, the APA says.

Mental health services for those under correctional or community supervision are critical to their well-being and ability to build fulfilling lives free from criminal activity, the APA says.

There are efforts to address these challenges.

For example, Morgan said he has witnessed a successful program in Houston that combined mental health recovery services with training that aims to reduce future criminal justice contact.

This joint effort has led to reducing recidivism by nearly half, he said.

"We need to target issues that are putting people at risk both for mental health contact and improving their quality of life but also target this population for risk for future contact with the justice system," Morgan said.

Panelist Altha Stewart, president of the American Psychiatric Association, explained that the role of the psychiatrist is to manage the psychiatric medication of people with serious mental illness.

"We are underrepresented in correctional settings," she said.

Having a plan for after care and readmission to the community for individuals involved with the criminal justice system is important, she explained.

It's a balance, she said.

"You have to focus on reducing recidivism and an appropriate treatment plan if you are going to accomplish any level of continuity in that



person’s level of treatment,” Stewart said.

She urged passage of the Medicaid Reentry Act (H.R. 4005). This bill would allow Medicaid payment for medical services furnished to an incarcerated person during the 30-day period preceding the individual’s release. It would allow the person an opportunity for a smoother transition from incarceration back into the community, she said.

### Medicaid

Panelist Gabrielle de la Gueronniere, director of policy at the Legal Action Center, noted that Medicaid

is the single largest payer for people with mental health care needs.

Close to 30 percent of the people who receive coverage through Medicaid expansion have a mental health or substance abuse disorder, she said. “Medicaid is critically important to this population.”

However, Medicaid continues to be threatened. There are discussions in Congress for cuts to the program and/or to increase requirements, such as drug testing and work, in order to receive benefits. These attempts have the potential to cause a severe setback for this population, she said.

Gueronniere supported efforts to enforce the Wellstone-Domenici Mental Health Parity and Addiction Equity Act of 2008.

It requires that insurance coverage for behavioral health care services is equivalent to the coverage that insurers provide for physical health care services.

“This law, which has been around for 10 years, is not enforced,” Gueronniere said.

She urged support of the Behavioral Health Coverage Transparency Act of 2018 (S. 2301), which establishes a consumer parity portal that gives patients a single place to get information about

NASW CEO Angelo McClain, right, moderates an expert panel on Capitol Hill titled “Innovations and Challenges in Providing Mental Health Services to People in Prison and Those Re-entering the Community.”

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their rights as well as other provisions to ensure mental health parity laws are enforced.

### Recommendations

Avoiding incarceration is the best way America can address the influx of individuals with mental illness in the criminal justice system, said panelist Denny Kaemingk, secretary of the South Dakota Department of Corrections and chairman of the Behavioral Health Committee at the Association of State Correctional Administrators.

“One in 10 law enforcement calls is related to mental illness,” he said.

He noted in 2016 a task force was formed in South Dakota to improve public safety. Among

its goals was to identify mental illness in people coming into contact with the criminal justice system.

From that program, 15 recommendations and outcomes of the task force were developed and many of them are in practice today, Kaemingk said.

Among the recommendations are:

- Strengthen the ability of law enforcement to identify mental illness.
- Require the use of a standardized mental health screening at jail intake.
- Establish a process for mental health assessment.
- Expand the availability of crisis services statewide.
- Provide training for prosecutors to utilize

deferred prosecutions.

- Expedite the completion of court-ordered competency evaluations.

Six of every 10 inmates in South Dakota’s jails have symptoms of a mental health disorder, Kaemingk said.

“We can and must do a better job of treating individuals suffering from mental illness,” he said. “It should start at the first time they have contact with the criminal justice system.”

Write to us to weigh in on this or other topics at [swadvocates@socialworkers.org](mailto:swadvocates@socialworkers.org).



**We can and must do a better job of treating individuals suffering from mental illness. It should start at the first time they have contact with the criminal justice system.”**

SOCIAL WORK IN ACTION

## Member Serves Juvenile Justice



Jessica Black, left, receives the CMU 2018 NASW-Michigan Student of the Year Award from Program Director and NASW-Michigan Vice President of Social Policy Susan Grettenberger.

Michigan Gov. Rick Snyder announced appointments to the restructured Michigan Committee on Juvenile Justice, including NASW member Jessica Black. The committee advises the governor on juvenile justice issues and guides effective implementation of juvenile justice policies and programs.

**Black will represent persons under the age of 24 on the committee during her term.**

Black, who was NASW-Michigan’s 2018 Student of the Year for Central Michigan University, volunteered and then interned at Isabella County Restoration House (ICRH), a homeless shelter in Mt. Pleasant.

She is the treasurer and past president of the Student Social Work Association at Central Michigan University, and is the ICRH representative on the Isabella County Substance Abuse Coalition.

Black will represent persons under the age of 24 on the committee and her term will run until Dec. 31, 2019. 🌐

## Japanese Delegation Visits NASW

A group of leading social work professors from Japan visited NASW’s national office in Washington, D.C., to learn about the association’s strategy and management practices to enhance the interest and involvement of members in international affairs. Among the visitors were core members of Japanese counterpart organizations of the International Federation of Social Workers and the International Association of Schools of Social Work.



NASW celebrated Older Americans Month (OAM) in May. This year’s theme, “Engage at Every Age,” emphasized that people of all ages can take part in activities that enrich their emotional, mental and physical health and well-being.

An integral part of NASW’s OAM 2018 observance was advocacy for federal funding of the Older Americans Act, the Geriatrics Workforce Enhancement Program, and other programs essential to the health and well-being of older adults. Social work advocacy for these programs remains critical. Visit [bit.ly/2GjvCKb](http://bit.ly/2GjvCKb) to read NASW’s OAM 2018 blog and to find a link to the associated action alerts.

## Older Adult Population Growing Rapidly in the United States

The U.S. Census Bureau projects that by the year 2030, one in five U.S. residents will be 65 years or older—and by 2035, older adults will outnumber children in this country for the first time in history. This demographic shift can be attributed not only to the aging of the baby boom generation, but also to declining fertility rates and increases in life expectancy. As the population ages, it is also becoming increasingly multicultural. Visit [bit.ly/2k8zswT](http://bit.ly/2k8zswT) and [bit.ly/2k8zswT](http://bit.ly/2k8zswT) to learn more about the current population of older adults and the projected demographic shifts. 🌐

THE PROFESSIONAL—CLINICAL PRACTICE

## Experts Discuss Mental, Behavioral Health in Older Adults



PHOTO BY THINKSTOCK

Nearly one in five older adults in America has one or more mental health and substance use conditions. If the prevalence of mental illness remains unchanged over the next two decades, the number of older adults with mental health and/or substance use disorders will nearly double from 8 million to 14 million.

Experts discussed these and other challenges older adults face during two events in May:

- A Capitol Hill briefing, "Addressing the Crisis in Older Adult Mental Health," and

- A Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA)-hosted event in recognition of National Older Adult Mental Health Awareness Day. More than 1,000 people around the country observed the May 18 event by webcast.

The National Coalition on Mental Health and Aging, of which NASW is a member, co-sponsored both events. The Administration for Community Living co-sponsored the event at SAMHSA.

Experts said mental health is integral to overall health

and mental health for older adults.

While mental health and substance use disorders are not inherent to the aging process, the number of older adults living with these disorders—including opioid misuse—is growing. Stigma remains a barrier to services for this population.

Although progress is being made, the workforce is not prepared to meet the mental health and substance use needs of older adults.

Systems must also be transformed to integrate culturally competent mental health and substance use services with health care and long-term services and supports in all parts of the country, including rural parts, presenters said.

Federally funded programs, such as the Eldercare Locator, Older Americans Act programs, SAMHSA's National Helpline and the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline, play a critical role in preventing and addressing mental health and

substance use disorders among older adults. At the same time, additional federal funding is needed to bolster services, experts said.

Chris Herman, senior practice associate at NASW, attended both May events on behalf of the association.

"NASW is pleased that older adult mental and behavioral health featured so prominently in this year's observances of Older Americans Month and Mental Health Month," Herman said. "The association values its participation in NCMHA, and we appreciate the leadership of SAMHSA and ACL in drawing attention to this critical topic."

Among the presenters at the May 18 event were social worker Paolo del Vecchio, director of the Center for Mental Health Services at SAMHSA; and Lance Robertson, the assistant secretary for aging and the administrator of ACL.

Learn more at [ncmha.org](http://ncmha.org). 

### Clinical Practice Resources/Briefs

Clinical social workers are being denied the Board Certified Behavior Analyst (BCBA) credential restricting their work in applied behavior analysis (ABA). Members have requested NASW to provide them with assistance in reversing the denial. NASW has issued a Practice Perspective, "Applied Behavior Analysis and Certification for Clinical Social

Workers," addressing the topic: [socialworkers.org/LinkClick.aspx?fileticket=uPeNd-29RDQ%3d&portalid=0](https://socialworkers.org/LinkClick.aspx?fileticket=uPeNd-29RDQ%3d&portalid=0)

Clinical social workers who use social media in their private practice should develop a social media policy to inform patients how social media will be used in the therapeutic relationship. Learn more from the new Practice Perspective, "Sample Social Media Policy for

Clinical Social Workers in Private Practice" at [socialworkers.org/LinkClick.aspx?fileticket=e1aVBtX9HYA%3d&portalid=0](https://socialworkers.org/LinkClick.aspx?fileticket=e1aVBtX9HYA%3d&portalid=0)

NASW, The University of Texas at Austin School of Social Work, Baylor College of Medicine and the University of Missouri are working together to represent social work as part of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's cross-discipline partnership targeting

the prevention and care of Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders. Social work is collaborating with leaders in the professions of family medicine, obstetrics and gynecology, pediatrics, medical assistants, and nursing to prevent FASDs by improving health care practice, education, and awareness among health care professionals. Resources and information on training can be found on our behavioral health page. [socialworkers.org/practice/behavioral-health](https://socialworkers.org/practice/behavioral-health). 

THE PROFESSIONAL—SPECIALTY PRACTICE

## SPS Highlight: Social and Economic Justice and Peace

BY PAUL R. PACE



Social justice and racial equity have always been a passion for Jenny Andersen.

“It’s why I became a social worker,” she said. “The core values of social work and the very roots of the profession are rooted in social justice.”

Andersen, an LCSW who lives with her wife and rescued pit bull in Chicago, is the chair of the SPS on Social and Economic Justice and Peace.

“I was really interested in helping to bring connection and research about equity, social justice, and economic justice to social workers in collaboration with my social work colleagues,” she said.

Andersen noted that the section is a great resource for social workers from any discipline who are looking for information on equity and justice and community with

other social workers who are engaged in social justice work.

“I think it’s important, especially during increasingly divisive times, to remember that equity benefits everyone,” Andersen says. Diversity makes our work more inventive. Promoting equity and inclusion is for all disciplines and practices of social work, and one person has the power to make changes and connect people equitable to services.”

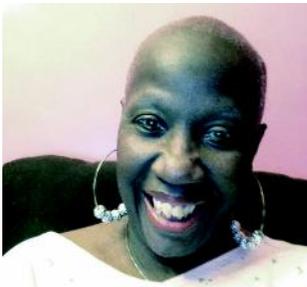
She said she is looking forward to two articles coming up in the next Section Connection, an SPS newsletter

published biannually and written for social workers by social workers.

“Dr. Anthony Hill wrote a wonderful piece on the representation of black people in the movie “Black Panther” and the implications for social workers; and Ellen Bartley wrote a thought-provoking piece on the Flint (Michigan) water crisis called ‘Institutionalized Environmental Injustice,’” Andersen said. 🔄

## SPS Highlight: Administration/Supervision

BY PAUL R. PACE



Janice Helena Hawkins worked for child protection services in New York City for 26 years, including in supervisory and administrative roles.

She has a PhD in public administration and a master’s degree in social work administration.

“Social workers are hands-on people who interact with people who have a problem, are in need or have whatever issue,” she said. “Hands on people need as much support as they can get from their administration.”

Hawkins, who is retired but still active in helping people—including co-hosting a radio show and lecturing—is the chairwoman of the SPS on Administration/Supervision.

“The types of articles we put out are relevant to people in the field of administration,” Hawkins said of the Section newsletter.

“One of the big things that has always frustrated me is a lack of venue if you wanted to do commentary or articles,” she said. The Section newsletters help fill this void.

“I enjoy doing articles,” Hawkins said. “You get to interact with other social workers of like mind.”

Hawkins encourages social workers to join the SPS in their professional area.

“I would encourage people to participate in these kinds of things,” she said. “The opportunity to affect social work and the direction it is going is really available, but you have to step up.” 🔄

### NASW Specialty Practice Sections

- Administration/Supervision
- Aging
- Alcohol, Tobacco & Other Drugs
- Child Welfare
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- School Social Work
- Social and Economic Justice & Peace
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NASW Specialty Practice Sections (SPS) enables members to stay abreast of what is happening in the profession and social work practice. SPS offers professional development opportunities through live and on-demand webinars, practice-specific newsletters, continuing education credits and more. Visit [bit.ly/2GFFf6g](http://bit.ly/2GFFf6g)

## BOARDROOM

## Two Longtime Volunteers Say Association Service is Essential

BY PAUL R. PACE



Volunteering to serve on NASW's national and chapter boards and committees

is a way to support the profession, according to two longtime NASW volunteers.

Mildred "Mit" Joyner, who just completed her term as vice president of the NASW board of directors, said she volunteered to run for the position after retiring from a 32-year career as a full professor with emeritus status. She directed and chaired the undergraduate social work department at West Chester University of Pennsylvania for 25 years.

"I wanted to go back to practice but I didn't want to obtain a paying job, so I went back to NASW and decided to run for vice president," Joyner said.

"I was taught as an undergrad at Howard University that you always belong to your professional association," she said.

Part of her inspiration to serve was to aid NASW in its mission to ensure social workers have the proper skills to practice as well as the tools to do their jobs ethically, while also making sure the public is protected.

"I think it's critical we get back to really getting people to understand the mission of NASW and to teach those who are entering our



profession what a professional organization does," she said.

Joyner is a proponent of social work students having board training and experience so they gain an understanding of the governing functions of for-profit and nonprofit organizations.

"It is the board's responsibility to make sure the staff and the CEO carry out the program goals and adhere to (the organization's) fiduciary obligations," Joyner said.

Social workers need to be on boards of their professional organizations, but they also need to be on boards outside their specialty, she said.

"We need to be on every board in America so that our voices are heard," said Joyner, who volunteers her time to serve not only on additional nonprofit boards but also at a bank.



Victor Manalo has been a dedicated volunteer to NASW at its local, state and national levels.

He most recently completed a term as chairman of the NASW National Committee on Nominations and Leadership Identification (NCNLI).

He also served as Region XIII representative on the NASW board of directors from 2011-2014, and he credits former NASW President James Kelly as a mentor who encouraged him to run for national office.

"My greatest reward has been to work together with my board colleagues, who are all passionate, dedicated social work professionals, and NASW staff, to ensure that NASW will be able to continue to serve and to advocate for its members and their clients," Manalo said.

He recommended NASW members begin their service

at the chapter level and then express their desire to serve at the national level with the chapter executive director and with the NCNLI representative. He advises being "patient with the NCNLI process."

"I went through the nominations cycle a number of times before I was slated to run for election for the national board, but I continued to serve at the national level on the Delegate Assembly task force and NASW PACE," he said.

Manalo said he has faced many challenges during his time on the national board, including making difficult decisions that were not always popular among the membership.

"At the end of the day, I am proud to have been able to make a contribution to the association during some rough times, and I look forward to receiving the call from NASW to serve again," he said.

For more: [socialworkers.org/about/governance](https://socialworkers.org/about/governance). 

FOUNDATION

## Strengthening International Social Service Workforce

BY PAUL R. PACE

“A worker can only be as good as the system for which they are working,” says Amy Bess, the director of the Global Social Service Workforce Alliance.



The NASW Foundation supports NASW’s educational and charitable initiatives through a wide range of projects, including international efforts to support social work programs that serve those in need. One example of these efforts is the Foundation’s active membership with the Global Social Service Workforce Alliance. The Alliance was conceptualized during the Strengthening the Social Welfare Workforce meeting in Africa in 2010 and was formed in 2012. NASW is a founding member of the Alliance and serves on the Global Alliance steering committee. Learn more at [NASWFoundation.org](http://NASWFoundation.org).

Efforts to improve these systems are taking place around the world, and leaders in social service agencies and governments shared some of their successes—particularly as it relates to protecting children from violence—during the 5th annual Social Service Workforce Strengthening Symposium, in May in Washington, D.C.

But more work is needed, Bess said.

“We’ve joined with a number of organizations to call on national and local governments to strengthen the social service workforce,” she said. “The call to action is based on the belief that we must work together to improve protection of health and well-being outcomes for children, youth, families and communities as outlined in the (U.N.) Sustainable Development Goals.”

The alliance has a membership of 1,800 people across 121 countries, Bess said. They come together to exchange promising practices, development tools and resources, and to advocate workforce strengthening.

“Together we can do a lot more than we can do alone—to build the evidence base and advocate for improved services to families,” she said.

Kirsten Di Martino, senior adviser at the Child Protection Section of UNICEF, was a keynote presenter at the symposium.



As a human rights lawyer, she said she has seen firsthand how essential a qualified and well-supported social services workforce is to child protection.

“I have advocated for governments to give this the attention it deserves,” she said. “Child protection laws, policies and services simply mean nothing if there is no motivated cadre of social service workers in place to drive the system.”

National child protection systems are struggling to meet the needs of more than 28 million children globally who are refugees, asylum seekers or are living in forced internal displacement, Di Martino said.

Another 20 million children have left their homes and migrated across international borders and are also at risk, she explained.

“In Somalia alone, almost 600,000 children moved from their homes in 2017,” Di Martino said. “And yet, Somali has only 20 qualified social workers employed by the government and only one university offering a social work degree.”

“The role of the social services workforce, especially the role of social workers, is still not understood in many countries,” she said.

Countries who have adopted the U.N.’s Sustainable Development Goals—and



Panelists from Uganda discuss country-level efforts in strengthening the workforce to protect children at the 5th annual Social Service Workforce Strengthening Symposium. From left: Patrick Onyango Mangen, Lydia Joyce Najjemba and Timothy Opobo.

specifically the goals that target preventing all forms of violence against children—represent an unprecedented opportunity both nationally and globally to address violence, exploitation and abuse of children, Di Martino said.

The symposium is available for on-demand viewing at [youtu.be/UUKRfyoQBGQ](https://youtu.be/UUKRfyoQBGQ).

Learn more about the Global Social Service Workforce Alliance at: [socialserviceworkforce.org](https://socialserviceworkforce.org). There is no cost to join the Alliance. 

## In Memoriam



NASW Social Work Pioneer® Rhoda G. Sarnat, who made pioneering efforts in enhancing the public image of professional social work, died April 14 at age 102.

The NASW Foundation noted that Sarnat, a longtime NASW member, created a unified effort to promote professional social work with the creation of the NASW Foundation International Rhoda G. Sarnat Award.

Sarnat and her husband, Bernard Sarnat, (1912-2011), established the endowed fund, which offers a monetary award to an individual, group or organization that has significantly advanced the public image of professional social work.

Since its inception in 1993, the Sarnat Award has been presented 24 times, and the list of esteemed recipients includes Ambassador Wendy Sherman (2017); author and researcher Brene Brown (2015); U.S. Sen. Barbara Mikulski (2013); Marilyn Flynn (2011); Dale Masi (1993) and the NASW Communications Network, founded by Suzanne Dworak-Peck (1993).

Sarnat served as assistant dean and director of field placement at the University of Southern California School of Social Work from 1961 to 1981.

She earned a bachelor's degree in psychology from the University of California, Los Angeles, and a Master of Arts degree from the University of Chicago's School of Social Service Administration.



CHAPTERS

## Summit Explores Ways to Better Prepare Social Workers Entering Workforce

BY PAUL R. PACE

High energy. Flexible. Adaptable.

These are some of the qualities Theresa Nihill looks for when hiring social workers.

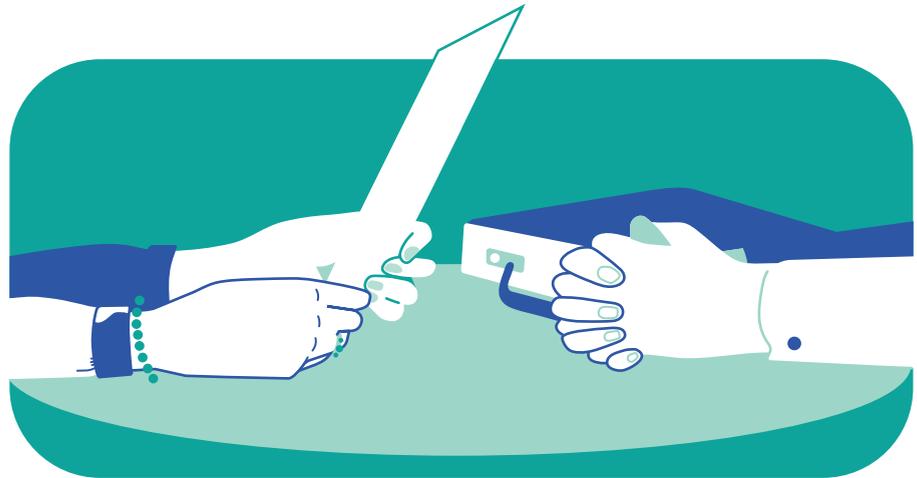
“Things change at light speed for us,” said Nihill, chief operating officer at Metropolitan Family Services in Chicago.

“What you learned a year ago may not be what is expected of you now. You need to be able to roll with that.”



It's an absolute standard expectation for a new grad entering the field to know, don't be a jerk"

– Mary Gollings



Mary Gollings, president of the NASW Illinois Chapter and supervisor at Jesse Brown VA Medical Center in Chicago, said she looks for social work job candidates who are timely, accountable and team players.

“It’s an absolute standard expectation for a new grad entering the field to know, don’t be a jerk,” she said. “Be a good team worker. If your partner on your team needs help, help them...”

These recommendations were part of a roundtable held during a Social Work Workforce Development Summit the NASW Illinois Chapter hosted earlier this year. More than 50 statewide leaders from the social work employment/practice arena and schools of social work

came together to discuss ways the two sectors can work together to strengthen the preparation of social workers entering the workforce.

The two groups also want to help ensure social work will continue to play an important role in the human services marketplace, said Joel Rubin, executive director of the Illinois Chapter.

The summit grew out of the “Profile of the Social Work Workforce” study, which was released in 2017. An article about the report can be found in the February 2018 NASW News. ([socialworkers.org/news](http://socialworkers.org/news).)

A story about the second product of the workforce study, “New Social Workers: Results of the Nationwide Survey of 2017 Social Work

Graduates,” can be found in the May 2018 NASW News.

NASW Social Work Pioneer® Robyn Golden, associate vice president of population health and aging at Rush University Medical Center, said ideal social work job applicants tolerate ambiguity and change, and adapt to a fast pace. They also need to show people, through data collection, that social workers offer a return on investment.

This is done “so we can say not only the ‘why’ and ‘what,’ but the ‘how’ we can make a difference in someone’s life,” Golden said.

A video of the roundtable discussion is available at [youtu.be/U2fzmMH6nkQ](https://youtu.be/U2fzmMH6nkQ).

Learn more about the summit at [naswil.org](http://naswil.org).

## Chapter Spotlight



Former NASW New York City Chapter Executive Director Bob Schachter was selected to receive the 2018 Chauncey Alexander Lifetime Achievement Award from the Network for Social Work Management.

Alexander served as executive director of NASW from 1969-1982. The award was

established in 1989 to honor the entire career of exceptional social work managers that reflect Alexander’s passion and commitment to the social work profession, according to the Network for Social Work Management.

Schachter’s career and accomplishments are reminiscent of Chauncey and his abilities to be an exemplary transactional manager and a creative transformational leader, the network stated.

Schachter, who was executive director of NASW-NYC from July 1990 to January 2017, was recognized for joining the chapter with other prominent leaders in a commitment to address institutional racism.

He helped create the chapter’s Latino Social Work Task Force in addition to the NYC Human Services Council’s Racial Equity Work Group.

“It is apparent that over the years, you did not settle on solutions that were most expedient, but solutions that have had a lasting impact,” the network said about Schachter.



Jennifer Wells was named the NASW West Virginia Chapter’s Social Worker of the Year and delivered a keynote address at the chapter’s spring conference.

According to an article published in the Charleston Gazette-Mail, Wells moved to West Virginia after being displaced by Hurricane Katrina.

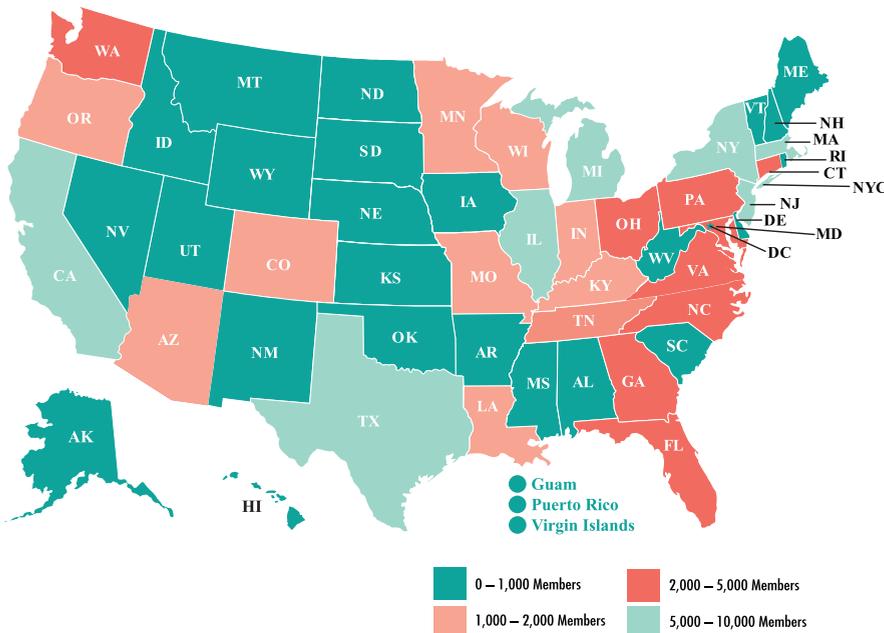
Debra Hunt Young, vice president of the chapter, is quoted in the article, saying that Wells “has built a system of support around herself and also is a support to others. She both embodies the spirit of social work and what West Virginia is all about.”

In another article by the Public News Service, Wells said West Virginia was welcoming after she was displaced by the hurricane.

Social work leads to activism, because social workers see problems firsthand as a web of interconnected issues that can only really be addressed by broad-based policies, the article says.

“Make it easier for somebody to find a home,” Wells says in the article. “Make it easier for somebody to find a treatment bed. Make it easier for a child to get into college and stay in college, not doing the work for them but helping them build themselves up so they can speak for exactly what they need.”

## National Association of Social Workers Membership



## Upcoming Conferences

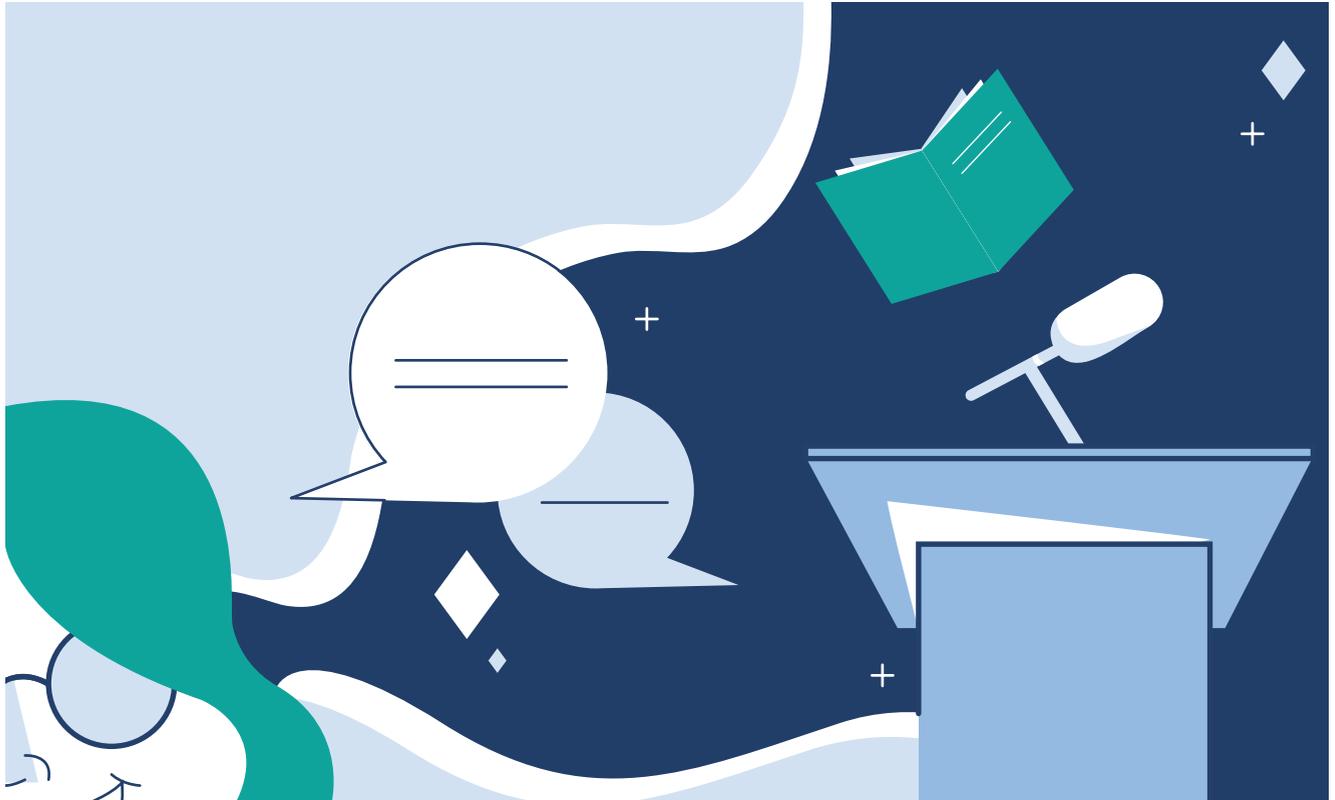
NASW-Pennsylvania Annual Social Work Conference  
 Sept. 12-14, 2018  
*Manor, Pa.*

NASW-Northwest Conference  
 Sept. 14-16, 2018

NASW-Nebraska Annual Conference  
 Sept. 20-21  
*Omaha, Neb*

NASW-Indiana Annual Conference  
 Oct. 1-2  
*Indianapolis, IN*

SAVE THE DATE



**August**

Aug. 15  
An Hour With Private Practice: Questions & Answers  
Topic: “Documentation Tips for Successful Reimbursement”  
[socialworkers.org/practice/an-hour-with-private-practice](https://socialworkers.org/practice/an-hour-with-private-practice)

**September**

Sept. 12-14  
NASW Pennsylvania Chapter Annual Social Work Conference  
*Kalahari Resort, Pocono Manor, Pa.*  
[nasw-pa.org](https://nasw-pa.org)

Sept. 13-16  
Cape Cod Symposium on Addictive Disorders (CCSAD)  
*Hyannis, Mass.*  
[ccsad.com](https://ccsad.com)

Sept. 14-16  
NASW-Northwest Conference on Social Work  
*Coeur d’Alene, Idaho*  
[naswidaho.org](https://naswidaho.org)

Sept. 19  
An Hour With Private Practice: Questions and Answers  
Topic: “An Overview of Ethical Dilemmas in Private Practice”  
[socialworkers.org/practice/an-hour-with-private-practice](https://socialworkers.org/practice/an-hour-with-private-practice)

Sept. 20-21  
NASW Nebraska Chapter Annual Conference  
*Omaha, Neb.*  
[naswne.org](https://naswne.org)

**October**

Oct. 1-2  
NASW Indiana Chapter Annual Conference  
*Indianapolis*  
[naswin.org](https://naswin.org)

Oct. 5  
NASW North Dakota Chapter Annual Conference  
*Mandan, N.D.*  
[nasw-heartland.org](https://nasw-heartland.org)

Oct. 11-13  
NASW Texas Chapter State Conference  
*Arlington, Texas*  
[naswtx.org](https://naswtx.org)

MILESTONES

## NASW and Social Work: The Early Years

The first formal classes in “social philanthropy” were offered by the Charity Organization Society (COS) of New York City during the summer of 1898. COS had its roots in the late 19th-century movement to address urban poverty. The launch of these courses is considered the start of the modern social work profession in the United States.

In 1917, The National Social Workers’ Exchange, the first social work group that would later form NASW, was launched. The organization addressed issues of concern, set professional standards, and in its early years served as a placement bureau for social workers.

In 1948, social work organizations began studying whether they should join forces to pool resources and strengthen social welfare programs.

The American Association of Social Workers (AASW), the American Association of Medical Social Workers (AAMSW), the American Association of Psychiatric Social Workers (AAPSW), the American Association of Group Workers (AAGW), and the National Association of School Social Workers (NASSW) were all represented at a meeting to discuss how to work toward establishing a unified professional social work organization.

In October 1955, the plans for a single professional organization for social workers reached fruition and the National Association of Social Workers (NASW) began operating.

### National Social Work Month

President Ronald Reagan signed a proclamation in 1984 to establish March as National Social Work Month. The beginning of the documents says:

It is appropriate that Americans express our appreciation to the many thousands of dedicated men and women in all parts of our Nation who have devoted their lives to helping those in need. For more than a century, social workers have been committed to the betterment and general welfare of all our society. They have helped implement social services with creativity, resourcefulness, and true professionalism.

### Social Workers in Congress

Rep. Edolphus Towns, D-NY, with the support of other social workers in Congress and NASW, launched the Congressional Social Work Caucus in 2011. The caucus focuses on social safety net programs in Congress. A key social work legislation is the Dorothy I. Height and Whitney M. Young, Jr. Social Work Reinvestment Act. The act helps provide comprehensive analysis of issues facing the social work profession, including workforce trends, high educational debt, low salaries, cultural diversity, and the connection between research and practice. 🎧

## NASW Timeline

- 1898**
- MODERN SOCIAL WORK ERA BEGINS**
- First social work courses offered at New York’s Columbia University.
- 1917**
- NASW’S EARLIEST ORIGIN**
- National Social Workers’ Exchange Begins.
- 1955**
- NASW IS ESTABLISHED IN OCTOBER**
- Nathan E. Cohen becomes the first NASW president and Joseph P. Anderson its first executive director.
- 1955**
- NASW NEWS LAUNCHES**
- The first issue of the NASW News is published in November.
- 1960**
- FIRST CODE OF ETHICS**
- The NASW Delegate Assembly adopts the association’s first Code of Ethics.
- 1974**
- PRESIDENTIAL PARDON**
- Pardon of disgraced President Richard M. Nixon prompts NASW CEO Chauncey Alexander to call for pardon of the poor.
- 1984**
- SOCIAL WORK MONTH BECOMES OFFICIAL**
- President Ronald Reagan officially recognizes March as National Social Work Month.
- 1990**
- NASW PRESS LAUNCHES**
- NASW creates the NASW Press to advance social work scholarship through the publication of books, journals and other resources.
- 2001**
- THE NASW FOUNDATION IS ESTABLISHED**
- The Foundation was created to enhance the well-being of individuals, families and communities through the advancement of social work practice.
- 2011**
- SOCIAL WORKERS IN CONGRESS JOIN FORCES**
- The Congressional Social Work Caucus is created with NASW’s support.

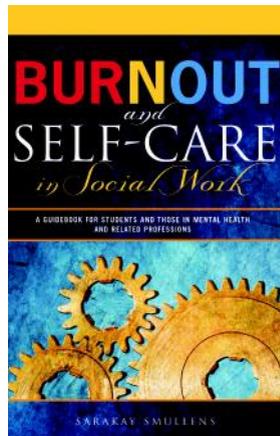
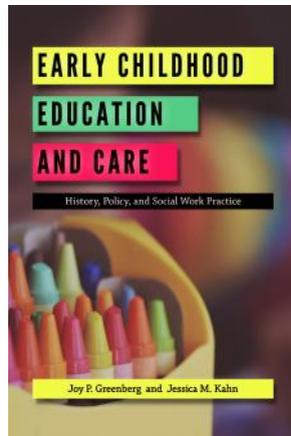
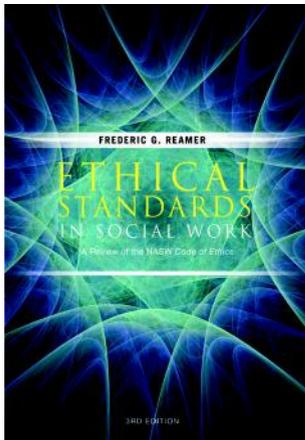
TOOLBOX

## NASW Press Offers Books, Journals and Other Publications that Support Social Work

BY PAUL R. PACE

NASW Press is the leading society-affiliated publisher in the field of social work, producing books, journals, and social work professional standards and other brochures.

“We have a wide variety of products we offer to the social work community, which includes academics, colleges and universities, practitioners and clinicians,” says Cheryl Bradley, publisher of the NASW Press.



NASW Press products are also in demand by government agencies, libraries, and other institutions, she said.

The Press publishes seven to eight books a year and Bradley said she is always looking for potential authors. “We’re here to demystify the process of publishing. We can explain what it takes to submit a manuscript and have it published by the Press.”

“Even though we have products that focus on specific practice areas, we look for topics that are cutting-edge and current as well,” she said.

For example, the Press recently published “Disability, Intimacy, and Sexual Health: A Social Work Perspective,” a compilation of comprehensive research and candid interviews with social workers that explores the complicated intersection of

disability and sexuality throughout the life span.

Most recently, the Press has updated Frederick G. Reamer’s “Ethical Standards in Social Work: A Review of the NASW Code of Ethics,” now in its third edition. The updated volume reflects the changes made to the “Code of Ethics” 2017; the new version of the Code went into effect on Jan. 1, 2018.

The Press publishes a book of NASW’s policy statements, “Social Work Speaks,” every three years, with an e-book update halfway through each three-year period. It also publishes social work standards and brochures on various areas of practice. A recent example is “The NASW, ASWB, CSWE, & CSWA Standards for Technology in Social Work Practice,” a collaborative effort between multiple social work organizations that serves as a guide to social workers

incorporating technology into their services.

NASW Press also is a publisher of scholarly journals. “Social Work” is the association’s flagship journal and a member benefit. Together with “Children & Schools,” “Health & Social Work,” and “Social Work Research,” these are peer-reviewed journals published quarterly. “Social Work Abstracts” compiles abstracts from these journals for social work and social welfare literature.

Press staff promote the products at social work conferences—first and foremost the biannual NASW conference, and also the annual program meeting for the Council on Social Work Education.

“It is our primary meeting outside of NASW’s conferences,” Bradley says. “It gives us a chance to showcase our products to the scholarly community.”

“We’re always happy to have people stop by the booth and check out the new books,” says Julie Gutin, NASW Press managing editor of books and journals. “And it’s a chance to meet the authors who work with us. It’s also an opportunity to say thank you to the editors in chief who work with us in voluntary positions.”

NASW Press products are available in print and e-book format at [NASWPress.org](http://NASWPress.org) and [eBooks.NASWPress.org](http://eBooks.NASWPress.org). 

# Trail Talk

BY LAETITIA CLAYTON



John Cowart was in the middle of a six-and-a-half-month hike on the Appalachian Trail when he got the call that he had received NASW's Social Worker of the Year award in 2016. He left the trail briefly to "clean up" and travel to Washington, D.C., to receive the award during a special ceremony as part of NASW's national conference. Cowart was recognized for his years of work with generations of veterans at the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs in Asheville, N.C. He retired in 2015 and started planning to hike the Appalachian Trail.

## Why Hiking?

I've always loved the outdoors. I have three brothers. My brothers and I have done a lot of backpacking and fishing together. I also did a lot of hiking with an Army buddy of mine. I just love being out there. My mind, body and spirit feels better when I'm on the trail. I've never experienced the kind of freedom you have on the trail. You know, just to be.

## Why the AT?

It's quite the adventure, even though it's the hardest thing I've ever done. The trail provides a lot of transformative experiences...My wife has known I was always going to do it. She's not the happiest trail widow, but she knows I really needed to do this for myself for a number of reasons. It's different for everyone who does it. For some it's spiritual, for some it's athletic.

I'm always curious what motivates people to do it.

To me it was never about the miles. It's about the scenery, the views, whatever epiphany you might have. There are lots of memories and people you meet.

## Lessons Learned?

The first thing the trail taught me is we can do more than we think we can. I was 64 when I did it. Actually, I had my (65<sup>th</sup>) birthday on the trail. You're not the same person when you come off the trail. What really excites me is when people live intentionally. Make mindful decisions. Liberate yourself. Be who you are meant to be...It's a moving community on the trail. You develop a trail family. You're always looking out for each other. It's a tightknit community as it's moving north. There are journals in every AT shelter, people communicate. It restores your faith in humanity.

## Why Social Work?

I'm not sure if you choose the profession or it chooses you.

The core values of the social work profession have always resonated within me. I'm proud of our professional organization and proud of NASW for being the flag bearer for those values. I'm a veteran (Vietnam). I did my graduate internship at a VA hospital. Sometimes we feel like we've come full circle. The pieces fit when I started working with fellow veterans. I look back on my career, and I enjoyed every day. I enjoyed my last day. I saw patients on my last day. And then I hiked home.

## Similarities Between Social Work and Hiking?

There's a white blaze, 2 by 6, that marks the trail. It's painted on various things. That's how you follow the trail. As long as you see the white blaze, you know you're on the right path.

Our Code of Ethics defines us as a profession and lets us know we're on the right path. I would see those kinds of similarities. I always looked for metaphors

with my patients in my career. There are 90,000 of those blazes, and people still get lost.

## What's Next?

On the West Coast, there's the John Muir Trail (which runs mostly in conjunction with the Pacific Crest Trail. There's also the Continental Divide Trail. People do all three (AT, PCT, and CDT), and that's called the triple crown. I really want to do the John Muir. I'll probably figure out how to do that in the next year. My pack stays packed. I'm always ready, including a three or four days' supply of food. So I can just get in my truck and go.

*If you or an NASW member you know has an interesting pastime, please share it with us by emailing [swadvocates@socialworkers.org](mailto:swadvocates@socialworkers.org).* 🎧

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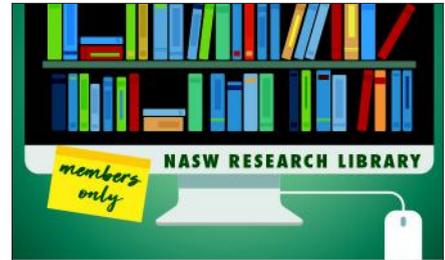
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# Shaping a Brighter Tomorrow Together

BY ANGELO MCCLAIN, PhD, LICSW



In June, approximately 2,000 NASW members participated in the 2018 NASW National Conference held in Washington, D.C. This biannual national event and our chapter conferences are sources of great pride and inspiration for the entire social work profession. These gatherings elevate the best of social work and help prepare us for evolving challenges we face as committed human service professionals.

We will feature more highlights from the national conference in our next issue, however, many of the themes and takeaways provided by our outstanding conference speakers this summer are

poignant reminders that what social workers do every day truly matters. Their insight helps affirm core values essential to our work—using respect and authentic communication to improve opportunities and outcomes for all.

After an extraordinary social justice panel during the June conference, I was moved to recap several key messages in a poem, including comments from U.S. Sen. Cory Booker.

Here's an excerpt:

*Be not discouraged  
Be not distracted  
Stay the course*

*Refuse hate  
Refuse dehumanization  
Refuse the false dichotomy  
of otherness*

*Hopelessness is the enemy of justice  
Through hope we have power  
There's power in seeing  
Power in listening  
Power in loving*

*Choose love over hate*

*Be brave  
Bear witness  
Really see what's happening  
around us*

*Understand the power  
of social work  
Understand the power of  
our skill set  
Continue to meet people  
where they are*

In addition to a successful and energizing national conference, the NASW board of directors also met in June. At that meeting, our volunteer

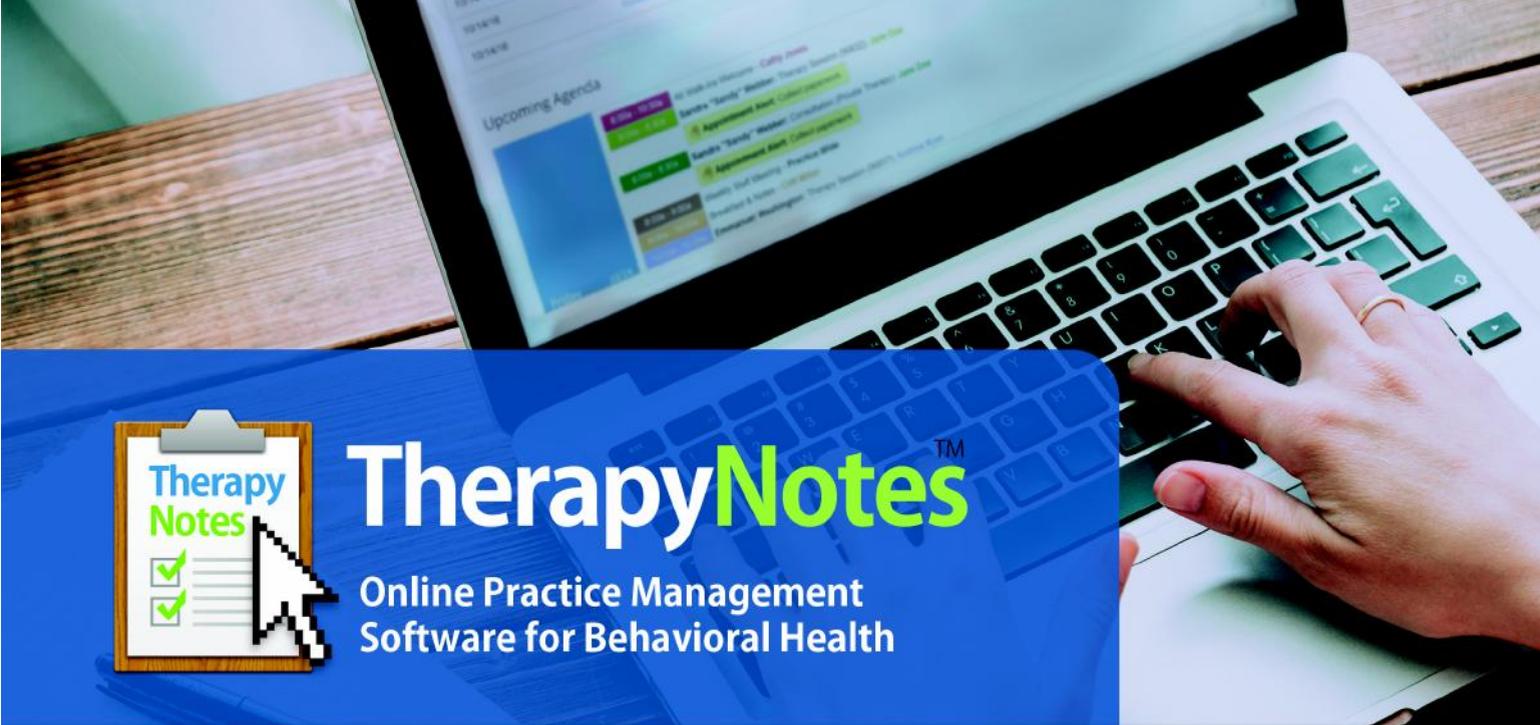
association leaders adopted the 2018–2021 NASW Strategic Plan with the theme, “Pursuing Social Work Excellence.”

This multi-strategy action plan presents a roadmap for creating breakthrough progress on six big ideas in the profession. I look forward to updating you in the coming months about these initiatives, and invite you to learn more about how our members continue to power our organization.

Your ongoing support of NASW helps shape a brighter tomorrow for all social workers. Contact Angelo McClain at [naswceo@socialworkers.org](mailto:naswceo@socialworkers.org). 🍷

Thank you.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Angelo". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.



# TherapyNotes™

## Online Practice Management Software for Behavioral Health

**11:30AM Appt with Kyle**  
 Called In to say he may be a little late

**12:00PM Appt with Susan**  
 Remember to collect paperwork

Create a Progress Note for your appointment on 4/16

Evaluation  
 Progress Note  
 Treatment Plan

Diagnosis: DSM-5 **anxiety**

Presenting Problem: F40.10 Social Anxiety Disorder  
 F41.8 Generalized Anxiety Disorder  
 F41.8 Other Specified Anxiety Disorder

Treatment Goals:

Electronically Sign this Note

Claim for John with Acme

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	12/2	\$100	90791
<input type="checkbox"/>	12/9	\$75	90832

Submit Claims

Acme Insurance Company

### Scheduling & To-Do Lists

Optimize how you manage appointments, notes, and billing. Your To-Do list automatically keeps track of notes you need to write, pending billing actions, and much more. Sync your calendar to your smart phone to view your schedule on the go.

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**I must sing TherapyNotes praises!**

I should have made this step a long time ago! The program is efficient, simple to use, and so helpful having all client information in one place. It was nice to be able to pull a client phone number off of my iPhone last week when I was not in the office. Thanks so much for this program, and keep working to make it better!

Jucinta Rome, LCSW

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and the new online community.

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## JOIN THE DISCUSSIONS

happening now at MyNASW, the new online  
interactive community for NASW members.

Launched in July, MyNASW has quickly become the online gathering place for NASW members. Be a part of lively discussions on topics you care about, such as online therapy services...clinical supervision...the social work role in immigrant family separation...compassion fatigue and stress management.

MyNASW is free and open 24/7. Grab your favorite beverage, have a snack, and connect with colleagues who share your passion—social work.

Log in to [MyNASW.SocialWorkers.org/home](http://MyNASW.SocialWorkers.org/home) today.